Friday, March 18, 2011 ★★ 15 sections / Vol. 26 / No. 100 / P15 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Text INQ to 2366 for 1 week

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS. FEARLESS VIEWS

"CATASTROPHE" A Japanese CH-47 Chinook helicopter heads to the stricken Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant carrying some tons of water on Thursday. But the water bombing from the chopper and fire trucks fails. Above, in this photo taken from an NHK TV video footage, Japanese military helicopter's dumped water on the crippled nuclear power plant in a bid to douse radioactive fuel rods.

Nuclear crisis alarms US

Japan plays down concerns about 'apocalypse'

RADIATION TESTS Evacuees from Fukushima receive radiation scans in Minamisoma City on Wednesday.

EMERGENCY DRILL Students from Midtog Elementary School in Seoul wear gas masks during a civil defense drill in preparation for possible attacks by North Korea and earthquakes at a subway station on Tuesday.

TOKYO—Amid widening alarm in the United States and elsewhere about Japan's nuclear crisis, Japanese authorities pushed for ever more desperate and unconventional methods on Thursday to cool stricken reactors, deploying helicopters and water cannons in a race to prevent perilous overheating in spent fuel rods.

The measures came a day after the chair of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave a far bleaker appraisal of the threat posed by the nuclear crisis than did Japanese government officials. He said radiation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station had spiked to "extremely high" levels.

But Japanese officials on Thursday played down the concerns of Gregory Jaczko, the chair of the US commission, who asserted that the nuclear crisis had worsened to the point that emergency workers would find it difficult to tackle the problems.

In his testimony before the US Congress on Wednesday, Jaczko pronounced Tepco (Tokyo Electric Power Co.) "not competent" and said American officials believed

FUKUSHIMA, A13

Foreigners stream out of Tokyo

TOKYO—Airlines scrambled on Thursday to fly thousands of passengers out of Tokyo as the United States authorized the first evacuations of Americans out of Japan and other governments—from Britain to South Korea—advised their citizens to leave.

As an increasing number of governments also urged their citizens to avoid unnecessary travel to this teeming city, there was a sharp drop in demand to fly to Japan amid growing concern over the country's ability to contain its nuclear crisis.

Europe's energy chief earlier warned of a further catastrophe at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear site.

Addressing a committee of the European Parliament, Guenther Oettinger on Wednesday said the situation at the earthquake-damaged plant was now "effectively out of control" and urged people to leave the country.

The former premier of the

FOREIGNERS, A13

Time running out for 3 Pinoys in China

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THREE Filipinos on death row in China for drug trafficking will be executed by April 2 unless the Philippine government appeals to the Chinese Supreme People's Court, a lawyer said on Thursday.

Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Liu Jianchao yesterday announced that a commutation of the death sentence on Ramon Credo, Sally Villanueva and Elizabeth Batain to life imprisonment had been "ruled out."

The three Filipinos were granted a rare reprieve last month on the representation of Vice President Jejomar Binay, causing hopes that their lives could be saved. (See What Binay Before on Page A18.)

But in a press briefing at the

TIME, A18

Leila takes aim at Dirty Harry

By Philip C. Tubeza and Jeannette I. Andrade

ALTHOUGH called Dirty Harry for nothing.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday assailed Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim for issuing a shoot-to-kill order on five Manila policemen accused of taking P12 million in ransom money for a kidnapped Malaysian businessman.

"He's still living in a different

LEILA, A14

Japan: PH rescue team must be self-sufficient

By Norman Bordadora

THE JAPANESE Embassy is warning word from Tokyo on the Philippine offer to send a rescue team to disaster-stricken Japan, but the ambassador stressed that the mission should be self-sufficient, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo said yesterday.

Mr. Romulo went to Japanese Ambassador Makoto Katsura's residence yesterday to sign a book of condolences and reiterated the country's offer of assistance to Japan in the aftermath of what has been called the

JAPAN, A10

Landslide kills family of 7 in Leyte

By Joy Cabiles, Jhunrie Magdasalin and Elvie Roman Rus
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—Ten people, including a family of seven, were killed while two children were missing when flash floods and a landslide hit 11 towns and two cities in four provinces, officials said.

Some 14,000 people were also affected by flooding triggered by monsoon rains since Wednesday in the provinces of Leyte, Eastern Samar, Samar and Biliran.

A couple and their five children were asleep when their house was swept away 10 meters and lifted buried in mud and boulders at 2 a.m. yesterday in

LANDSLIDE, A17

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Banco under receivership

By Michelle V. Ramos

THREE days after declaring a bank holiday for failing to service client withdrawals, Banco Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank (BF) yesterday was placed under receivership by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC).

In a meeting, the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas decided to place BF under PDIC receivership, noting that the thrift bank had shown that it was unable to save itself from its financial woes.

"The MB took note of the failure of the board of directors/management of BF to restore the bank's financial health and stability despite considerable time given to address its financial problems, and after accepting the requisite due process," the BSP said in a statement read by Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. in a press conference.

Losing since 2003

Espenilla, head of the BSP's bank supervision division, said Banco Filipino had been losing money since 2003 and its losses averaged P270 million a year since 2007. He said that in the last quarter, BF losses averaged P377 million.

Moreover, he said, BF's liabilities far outweighed its liquid assets. The net realizable assets of the bank stood at a negative P6.4 billion, he said.

Espenilla said the BSP actually granted Banco Filipino an emergency loan of P3.5 billion in 2002, and that P3.6 billion of the loan remained unpaid.

Espenilla said it was BSP's policy to help an ailing bank try to recover from financial distress before placing it under receivership, noting that this was consistent with the objective of maintaining the stability of the banking system.

Emergency loan

In the midst of the bank holiday, BF asked the BSP for another emergency loan, this time of P1 billion, to save it from its financial distress.

The BSP, however, decided not to grant the loan on the advice of the Monetary Board.

Espenilla said that for a bank to be granted an emergency loan, it must be approved by at least five of the seven members of the Monetary Board.

Espenilla said BF did not get the required number of votes, but declined to be more specific.

"In deciding to place BF under receivership, the MB took the following into consideration: BF is unable to pay its liabilities as they become due in the ordinary course of business; BF has insufficient realizable assets to meet its liabilities; BF cannot continue in business without resolving probable losses to its depositors and creditors," the BSP statement said.

Unsound banking

Espenilla said the BSP also found that BF had engaged in unsound banking practices.

He said the bank was offering deposit interest rates of between 6.5 and 7.4 percent, which was much higher than the market average of one to two percent, thus further placing its financial situation at risk.

Moreover, he said, Banco Filipino had also engaged in unsound lending practices. Of the 191.2 billion in loans it had extended, at least half were to investors that were related to officers and owners of the bank.

When a bank is placed under receivership, all of the bank's remaining assets and outstanding liabilities are taken over by the PDIC. The PDIC is also responsible for paying the deposit claims of bank clients.

Under its charter, the PDIC is mandated to pay valid deposit claims of up to P500,000 per depositor.

PDIC assurance

In a separate statement, the PDIC assured BF depositors that valid deposit claims would be paid and that it would complete the processing of claims as soon as possible.

"PDIC president Jose Stagnilas has directed the mobilization of the receiver organization to start with the payment of deposit insurance," the PDIC said in the statement.

Data from the central bank showed that BF had 177,622 deposit accounts with total deposits of P15 billion.

Furthermore, 97 percent of the depositors had deposits of P500,000 or less and were therefore covered by deposit insurance.

Ulhuen Capule, BSP deputy governor at content, said in the same press conference that deposits in excess of P500,000 would be returned, but hinted that the probability was small.

Once a bank is placed under receivership and proven to be incapable of being rehabilitated, Capule said, the PDIC sells its assets and the proceeds are distributed among depositors and other people or entities that have claims against the bank.

SINGSON

JAVIER

TOLENTINO

2 Ateneo grads top bar exams

By Philip C. Tubeza

STUDENTS from the alumnae de Manila University topped the two top slots of the 2010 bar examinations, with alumnus Cesareo Antonio S. Singson Jr. placing number one.

Another Junior Gambler, Carpio Morales and 2002 of the 4,847 takers, or 25.2% percent, the lawyer in remedy a decision, passed the exams. The passing grade this year was 72.6, and Supreme Court spokesperson Midas Marquez on to www.inquirer.net for a complete list of those who passed.)

"Before I left, next time for those who did not make it. Sometimes, luck plays a big role in the exams," said Morales, who announced the results before a record in front of the high court.

Family of lawyers

Singson, who comes from a family of lawyers and was the valedictorian of his class, had 1 a grade of 89 percent in claiming the top spot.

"He comes from Cabadbaran. His great-grandfather was a lawyer and so was his grandfather and his father. All of them reportedly topped," said remedial law law reviewer Rodrigo Lopa Quindoza.

"But it takes a very bright fellow," he said, also noting that Singson's grandmother graduated in the MV Dela Paz tragedy in 1987.

Second place went to Filemon Bay I, Jardeleza of Ateneo de Manila (with a grade of 86.95 percent) while Paolo Carlo C. Belmonte of the Ateneo de Davao University got the third place (86.80 percent).

Jasmine N. Sinaya of Ateneo de Davao University landed fourth with a grade of 85.9 percent while Johanna T. Barqui of Ateneo de Manila placed 8th with 85.85 percent.

No shutout for UP

Students from University of the Philippines took the ninth to eight slots in the top ten—Kristelle Marie S. Feliciano (85.65), Maria Christina C. Ortua and Krystal Lyn T. Up (both tied for 5th place with a grade of 85.20 percent), and Joanna Eliese M. Cuyuyan (84.8 percent).

William Bryson B. Gatcel Ateneo de Manila took the 9th slot with a grade of 84.75 percent while Elena C. Tanunpakisan of the University of San Carlos and Darren L. Salipsip of Arellano University both tied for the remaining 10th place with similar grades (84.55 percent).

"Present to God! Praise to God!" cried out Hilda Muller after seeing the name of her youngest daughter Janet Joy on the list of those who passed the exams. Her daughter cleared the bar on her first attempt.

"I prayed. I went on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Manaoag. I prayed before the Black Nazarene in Quiapo. My entire family prayed. Even the bishops prayed for her because she's a good child," said the proud mother, tears of joy welling beneath her eyes.

"She's a working student. She's a good child. She deserves it. Thank you, thank you," Muller gushed.

Those who passed will take their oath at the Philippine International Convention Center on April 14. Cite of Oath will be Marganito Sevares-Gutierrez, daughter of Justice Conrado Dinhal-man Morcos Bin Gui-lawian.

Brush up on English

For those who failed and are thinking of taking the exams again, bar examinee Quindoza offers this advice: Brush up on your English.

"When I read some of the answers, I was like 'What did he say?' Many of those who got a grade of below 70 did not know how to write and speak in English," said Quindoza.

Crazy, says bar topnotcher

By Nikko Dizon

BAR TOPNOTCHER Cesareo Antonio "Tat" Singson Jr. burst off to Manunggal Pangasinan, yesterday morning to offer prayers and light candles for him and his girlfriend and friends who were anxiously waiting for the results of the bar exams.

Singson said he promised to "wait and stand" for a journey to become a lawyer at the Our Lady of Manaoag.

When the results came out yesterday, he was on top of the list with a grade of 89 percent.

"It was unbelievable. It was crazy moment. I didn't want to believe it," Singson said. "We were waiting for the official results and we first was who really passed," Singson told reporters at the Supreme Court.

Cluster still was that no less than Chief Justice Renato Corona named his last bar exams 120 minutes at the Supreme Court's Deliberation Lounge to personally congratulate him and give him advice.

"Graduation is one but education never stops. I am still learning new things. Be aware that the world is not made up of lawyers alone," Corona told Singson.

Both were graduates of the Ateneo Law School. Singson graduated valedictorian of his class last year.

Singson, who will turn 27 next month, comes from a long line of lawyers in his family, going back to his great-grandfather.

"Because I can call you 'pather,'" Singson's father teased him. "Father's" is the name lawyers call one another.

Currently working as a paralegal at the Cagayan & Cammayun law office, Singson said he is set to take his chances in the United States in August.

He had been accepted at the Columbia University and New York University.

His boss, lawyer Jaime Cammayun, said the success by alumni that Singson is "serious, thorough, and a very promising lawyer."

"He has proven himself to be a great, good law student and now the challenge is for it to prove himself to be a worthy member of the bar," Cammayun said.

He went to tutoring with costs to me and grads, Cammayun said he had option to Singson on the prizes.

"I congratulated him and told him that we are proud of him and all his other batchmates who are also one or professes," Cammayun said.

Cammayun said that since being hired by the lawyer, Singson had been working hard as a paralegal.

"He has been writing, drafting pleadings. Once a paralegal passes the bar, he becomes an associate of the law firm," Cammayun said.

As bars topnotcher, Singson is guaranteed of a job at Cagayan & Cammayun.

And you, he'll be getting a raise, Cammayun said with a laugh.

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Keep off Spratlys row, China tells US

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE UNITED States should not interfere in territorial disputes in the South China Sea, Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Liu Jianchao said yesterday.

According to Liu, recent "words and actions" from Washington indicated "involving in the dispute between China and other claimants" in the potentially resource-rich Spratly and Paracel islands in the South China Sea.

"That's in no way helpful to the understanding and cooperation or dialogue between China and other claimant countries," he told a press briefing he gave at the Chinese Embassy yesterday.

Liu said the "involvement of non-claimant [countries] will only result in further complication."

Competing claims

Beijing effectively claims ownership over the whole maritime region of the South China Sea where there are competing claims to territories.

The Spratlys are a chain of tiny islands and reefs in the South China Sea claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

In addition, China and the Philippines both claim the Scarborough Shoal and China and Vietnam the Paracel islands.

Although largely uninhabited, the areas are believed to sit atop vast reserves of oil and natural gas. They straddle busy sea lanes and are rich fishing grounds.

Liu noted that "the concern expressed by the US is over freedom and security of navigation along sea routes in this region."

But he said China insists "have always been secure and free."

"China and (other) countries in this region are taking care of this area" without the participation of the US, he said.

Liu also said "maintaining peace and stability, freedom and security are in the interest of countries in East Asia. There is no reason why we should make this an issue," he added.

Late last year, China warned the US not to interfere in a territorial dispute in the South China Sea at an upcoming meeting in New York between President Barack Obama and Southeast Asian leaders.

Obama was then scheduled to meet Asean leaders in New York on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly.

Multilateral talks

During her July 8 security talks in Hanoi, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said resolving the South China Sea dispute was "pivotal" to regional stability and called for multilateral talks—a position long opposed by Beijing.

Early this week, Clinton phoned Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario where the "sides discussed the need to ensure maritime security in the Asia-Pacific."

Del Rosario and Clinton "agreed that a way forward is the conclusion of a binding regional code of conduct in the South China Sea."

Liu yesterday described the code as a "very important document," which "should be followed and observed by all claimants."

"So long as (it is) observed, peace and stability can be achieved in this area," he said.

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Ex-gov denies link to Ortega killing

By Philip C. Tabosa

PUERTO MERCEDES Gov. Jose Antonio Carreon yesterday denied being a mastermind in the killing of Palawan broadcaster Dong Ortega on Jan. 24 in Puerto Princesa City.

Carreon, wearing a barong tagalog and the pendant of a enchanted mistletoe, came to the Department of Justice yesterday to attend the preliminary investigation of the case and submit his counter-affidavit.

Ortega's widow Gemma, cried in black, stared intently at Carreon as he signed his affidavit right in front of her.

'Pacifist'

"I don't know why I'm being linked to the killing. I have no interests in Palawan. I'm a nonviolent person. I'm a pacifist," Carreon told reporters later.

Carreon's name cropped up in connection with the killing when suspect Rodolfo Ielfad Jr., his former security aide, linked him and former Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes to the murder of Ortega in a sworn statement.

Ielfad had allegedly contacted the gunman, Marlon Recomata, for the hit.

Politics

Carreon said Ielfad-Palawan politics may have been behind his being linked to the murder. He denies relations. He has denied introducing Ielfad to Recomata or any of the latter's people.

Reyes, alleged to be the other mastermind, did not appear at the preliminary investigation. His lawyer, Ferdinand Topacio, said he was awaiting a 15-day extension or longer to file Reyes' counter-affidavit.

"We need more time to get more documents like the ballistics report, the autopsy report and other important documents," Topacio said.

Video copy

"We also need to get a copy of the video of the killing to see if some information we have retrieved match those on the video," he added.

Ortega, a environmentalist, was an outspoken Palawan radio commentator who exposed alleged corruption and other wrongdoing in the provincial government. He was also a strong advocate for the environment that earned the country of promising adventure.

He also urged an investigation of the province's proceeds from the offshore Malampaya natural gas project.

P12 jeepney fare seen if gov't fails to act on fuel prices

A MINIMUM jeepney fare of P12 may not be forbidden if the government fails to act fast to address the rapid rise in fuel prices.

This was the assertion of public transport party-list group 1-United Transport Koalisyon (1-Utak) in a statement it issued yesterday calling on the government to help operators and drivers of public utility vehicles to cope with the increasing fuel prices and the expected drop in passengers when summer vacation begins in a few weeks.

"Based on a simple fare method of computation, a P12 minimum fare for jeepneys is not forbidden," said 1-Utak chair Vigor Mendoza II.

This would be 9%, or 30 centavos, over the current minimum fare of P8 for the first four kilometers. Students and senior pay a discounted P7.

Mendoza said 1-Utak members had been trying to keep fares down so as not to add to the burden of the commuters who are also struggling with rising costs.

"Such a high transport cost is also not good for drivers as their children and other family members ride public transport too," he said.

But Mendoza said the operators and drivers may soon have to ask for a fresh round of fare hikes if the government fails to implement several measures to soften the blow of high fuel costs.

"These include a review of the oil pricing mechanism, from replacement cost to re-tenancy-based pricing; assisting transport groups in setting up fuel cartons of their own in order to avoid of bulk pricing; and putting a stop to unfavorable contracts of fare operations that cut into the income of legitimate franchise holders," he said.

The group also called on the government to streamline the registration process for public utility vehicles and to weed out corrupt traffic enforcers from the streets.

Members also asked the government to use the windfall from the value-added tax (VAT) collections to help operators shift to cleaner and cheaper fuels. *Paolo G. Montecillo*

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COMPEX

10 gov't forensic experts to testify on bus hostage-taking on video

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE government forensic experts will orally today—on a video link—before the Hong Kong court's case investigating the August 2010 Quirino hostage taking involving Hong Kong tourists, according to Justice Secretary Leila de Lima.

Two National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) experts and eight Philippine National Police barricade experts will be testifying, she said.

"We'll be advising them on the expected procedure and their rights and the safeguards as committed by the Hong Kong counsel's road. But (as to their) testimony, we're in no position to brief them," De Lima told a press conference.

She said the witnesses' appearance before the Hong Kong court was approved by their superiors.

"The court is trying to determine the causes and circumstances surrounding the deaths. So, this is (a) fact-finding (investigation)," De Lima said.

No prosecution

"It's not a criminal proceeding. It's not prosecution. (But) as to what happens next once the coroner's court wraps up its fact-finding, (that) remains to be seen," she said.

The witnesses include Supt. Eileen Salmua Tungcum, Chief Insp. Joseph Palmera, Chief Insp. Benjamin Monsod Lara and Chief Insp. Shainne Lois Delfinado from the PNP Crime Laboratory.

Bullistics examiner Chief Insp. Daniel Lumibao, forensic chemist Chief Insp. Elma Reyes, Manila police scene-of-the-crime operations team leader Chief Insp. Maritess Bustamante and Manila police medico-legal officer Chief Insp. Ignacio Baltazar.

The NBI experts are forensic biologist Beverly Gloria-Mojares and fingerprint examiner Ligaya Bantawan.

On August 23, 2010, dismissed policeman Rolando Mendoza seized a busload of Hong Kong tourists in Manila, detaining to be released and cleared of extortion charges.

Bungled rescue

Eight of the tourists and the hostage-taker were killed and seven tourists were wounded when police commandos launched a bungled rescue attempt in a drama played out live on television around the world which embarrassed the country and soured our relations with China and Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was disappointed that President Aquino only called for criminal administrative charges to be filed against four police officers and spared from punishment the officials involved in the debacle.

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Aquino signs EO to adopt 'open skies' policy

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino has signed an executive order authorizing the civil aeronautics board (CAB) and the Philippine air agreement negotiating panels to aggressively pursue an open skies policy in the country.

He also issued an executive order reorganizing the Philippine panels that would negotiate the country's air service agreements.

The President issued the two EOs to fully liberalize the country's aviation industry and benefit tourism, trade and investment.

EO 20 signed on March 14, authorizes the Philippine air panels to offer third, fourth and fifth freedom rights to the country's airports other than the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Nia) without restriction as to frequency, capacity, type of aircraft and other arrangements that will serve the national interest as may be determined by the CAB.

Conditions

EO 20 also directs the CAB to impose special or other conditions on the availment or use by foreign carriers of such additional frequencies.

It prevents the CAB from granting foreign air carriers cabotage rights or the right to transport passengers and goods from two points in the Philippines.

EO 20, signed on the same day, exempts the Philippine air negotiating panel and the Philippines air consultation panel.

Under EO 20, the Philippine air negotiating panel would be responsible for the crucial negotiations that should lead to the conclusion of an air services agreement.

The secretary of trade or a duly authorized representative will be its chair while its members will come from the Department of Transportation and Communication and Tourism, and the executive director of the CAB.

The Philippine air consultation panel will be tasked of undertaking the succeeding negotiations of the air service agreements or another agreement.

The secretary of transportation will chair the consultation panel while the CAB executive director will be the vice chair. The members will come from the Department of Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, Labor and Employment and Tourism.

Benefit of travelers

EO 20 authorizes the chair of the consultation panel to designate other parties as observers but two more additional members to the consultation panel still with the approval of the President or the executive secretary.

President Aquino said there was a need to spur competition in the local aviation industry by encouraging more carriers to fly to the Philippines for the greater benefit of travelers.

EO 20 authorizes the Philippine air negotiating panel to grant third, fourth and fifth freedom rights to the country's airports other than the Nia subject to existing guidelines.

Third freedom

Third freedom rights refer to the freedom of an airline to carry traffic from a home country to another country for the purpose of commercial services.

A fourth freedom right is the privilege to pick up traffic from another country to a home country for commercial services, while the fifth freedom right is given to a carrier to carry traffic between two foreign countries on a flight that either originated in or is destined for the carrier's home country.

"With this we look forward to an increase in traffic coming in to the Philippines that we hope will bring in more tourists, more investments and spur competition right in the Philippine aviation industry and allow it to be competitive internationally," said Communication Secretary Ramon Ciesteng in a news briefing.

PAL to fly Japan aid for free

NATIONAL FLAG carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) announced yesterday it would accept donation relief supplies for free transport to Japan on "space-available" basis on any of its regular flights in the calamity hit-torn nation.

In a press statement, the airline said its chairman and CEO, Lucio Tan and president Jaime J. Bautista had directed all 20 domestic and 25 international stations to accept emergency cargo shipments bound for Japan.

"This is part of our modest contribution to the international relief effort for the survivors of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami," said Bautista. "Japan is one of our most important markets and this is but a small way of giving back to the affected communities."

PAL said it would give priority to shipments organized by accredited charities, non-profit organizations and reputable civic groups.

The donated cargo will be delivered to consular/civil charity organizations in Japan. Shipments may also be consigned to PAL's country manager in Japan, for distribution through PAL offices in the country.

Typical items eligible for free transport include, in order of priority:

• Medicines for both pediatric and adult use, such as antipyretics, analgesics, cough and cold preparations, broad-spectrum antibiotics, topical ointments, various sizes of wound dressings and adhesive plasters or bandages, splints, sutures and general surgery supplies.

• Flashlights and heavy-duty garden knives, capes for ambulists and similar rescue devices.

• Water purification tablets.

• Water-proof lightweight tents, sleeping mats and folding camp stoves, but not bear the GPS or flammable material.

• Dense or compact high nutrition value food items, such as powdered milk or formula, dried beans and other legumes, canned meat or fish, dehydrated ready-to-eat meals, sugar or sugar substitutes, coffee and wheat flour. Plain instant noodles are not a high nutritious value food item and are discouraged.)

• Lightweight thermal blankets, wind breakers, raincoats and thick socks in good condition.

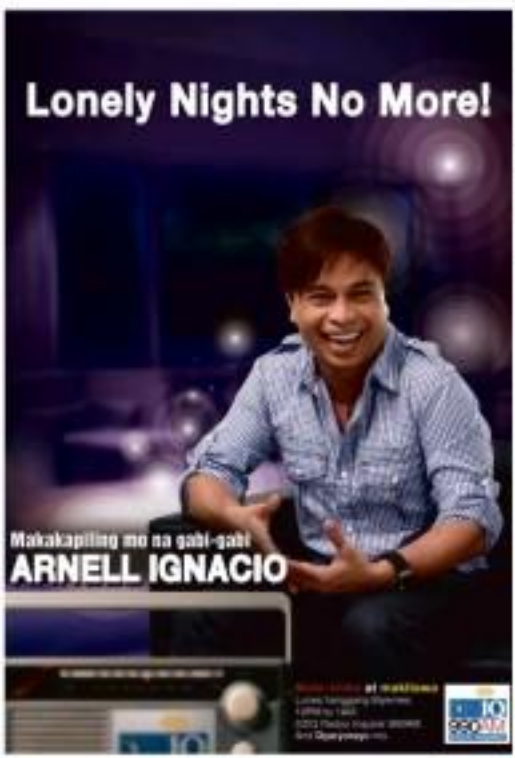
• New underwear, preferably thermal, for all ages and genders.

Shippers are advised to remove excess packaging in order to save on weight and space.

Items that do not qualify for free passage under PAL's offer are water and rice, which can be shipped more efficiently and economically via other modes of transport. used clothing and shoes for tropical climate, and handbags and fashion accessories.

PAL said their support for the Japan relief effort comes as the pioneer flag carrier marks its 74th anniversary. PAL took to the skies on March 15, 1941, and is recognized as Asia's first airline.

For inquiries and other information regarding donations for transport, interested parties may contact Ms. Carmen Aquino Sarmiento, Executive Director of the Philippine Airlines (PAL) Foundation through mobile number 0920917-5107259, 0922 854-2088, 0922 855-8008 ext. 2333, fax (632) 852-8096 or visit the PAL Foundation offices at Gate 2, PAL Maintenance Base Complex, Andrews Avenue, Nichols, Pasay City.



Loren: Use banned sirens as tsunami warning devices

By TJ Burgonio

THE NEXT time you're out in the country and you hear a car siren behind you, don't jump aside but, rather, run for your life.

That's President Aquino's drive against noisy energy (private vehicle) sirens coming to fruition.

Rather than let idle its noise nuisance, the sirens seized from those who continue to insist on noisily hurtling their way through traffic, should be donated by the Philippine National Police to the localities for use as warning devices during disasters, Sen. Loren Legarda said yesterday.

"Private vehicle sirens, bells, horns and similar gadgets use, she added.

"I hope the sirens will be given to high risk areas such as vulnerable barangays so they could be warned of impending tsunami or flooding," said the senator, chair of the climate change committee, at a briefing press forum.

The Philippines had been described as the world's third disaster prone country after being hit by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons, floods and landslides and epidemics like dengue in the last few years.

In a bill(s), Legarda recommended to PNP Director General Raul Bacalzo that the sirens and other warning devices should be turned over to the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC).

The NDRRMC in turn could distribute these to barangays in disaster-prone areas across the country to serve as early warning devices, she said.

"Protected barangays from disasters which people are vulnerable and unprepared. This simple yet cost-effective measure will go a long way in helping our barangays avert the loss of lives and property," Legarda said in a bill.

To set the example, Sen. Aquino has made the use of sirens by vehicles in the presidential convoy which arrived in house officials being forced to do likewise. Those caught will be using the equipment confiscated.

Legarda said early warning systems for disasters need not be high-tech, pointing out that something as basic as a whistle could prove to be a most effective and inexpensive lifesaving device.

Whistles could be used to warn villagers of impending danger and also direct them to move to higher ground, she said.

They would also come in handy, she said, when radios, mobile phones and other means of communication fail.

"We have to put this (alert system) in place immediately. We have no time to lose," she said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

MARCH 18 (Friday)
Psalter: Week 3
Cyril of Jerusalem + Lent Weekend Lent
Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8
If you, friend, march independent, who can stand?

1st Reading: Jer 18:18-20

Then said they: Come, let us devise plans against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us denounce him to the king, that he may be condemned, and let us not heed any of his words. Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of my adversaries. Shall evil be rendered for good, that they have digged a pit for my life? Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.

Gospel: Mt 5:20-26

Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you, that if you are not righteous in a much broader way than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to our people in the past, 'Do not commit murder; anyone who does kill will have to face trial.' But now I tell you: whoever gets angry with a brother or sister will have to face trial. Whoever insults a brother or sister deserves to be brought before the council; whoever calls a brother or a sister 'fool' deserves to be thrown into the fire of hell. So, if you are about to offer your gift at the altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there at the front of the altar, go to meet and make peace with him, and then come back and offer your gift to God. "Don't forget this: do reconciled with your opponent quickly while you are together on the way to court. Otherwise he will hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, who will put you in jail. There you will stay, until you have paid the last penny."

Reflection:

Jesus calls us to be righteous more than the teachers of the law in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. It means to enter into a positive relationship with God and His will. We are often called to live our faith and our vocation with others, in community. Our community life should be the expression of the love of God. Our best offering to Him is to present a united community, working together, seeking to be faithful with our commitments.

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P2.2-billion smuggling case filed against palm oil importer

By Nikko Dizon

A MAJOR importer of palm oil was slapped with a P2.2-billion smuggling suit that the Bureau of Customs filed yesterday to the justice department.

At a press conference, Customs Commissioner Angelito Alvarez identified the company as Trans-Asia Philippines Manufacturing Industry.

The Cabuyao City-based firm had allegedly declared a jet below value of as low as P6.80 for the refined, bleached and deodorized (RBD) palm oil it imported from Malaysia between January 2010 and February this year.

Named in the charge sheet were Jason Uy Ito, the company's import manager, and customs brokers Benjamin Dela, Ebenio Bermudez and Joey Lamoste.

Few precedents

Deputy Customs Commissioner Gregorio Dumon, who also heads the agency's Anti-Smuggling Action Center, said the case was the first of its kind filed by the Bureau of Customs.

Alvarez said the bureau would refile here its clash with the Securities and Exchange Commission on the identities of Trans-Asia's owners and top officers.

"They would also be liable and would also be charged," he said.

Alvarez said Trans-Asia ranked No. 139 among the country's companies in terms of volumes of imports but was ranked No. 414 when it came to paying taxes.

Alvarez said an investigation showed that in 14 months, Trans-Asia imported a total of 89,604,161 kilograms of RBD palmolein with a declared per-kilo value ranging from 15 US cents (P6.60) to 0.0103 cents (P22).

Cheaper than bottled water

Alvarez noted that this made a kilo of palm oil "undeclared cheaper than a liter of bottled mineral water."

RBD oil is used for home cooking and commercial food processing. It is also used as raw material in manufacture soap, washing powder and other hygiene and personal care products.

The value-added tax (VAT) for Trans-Asia's declared importations, broken down in 17 import entries, were assessed to be worth just P64.8 million since the company declared a dutiable value of only P322.8 million.

However, other import documents obtained by the Bureau of Customs showed that Trans-Asia imported a total of 89,604,161 kilograms of RBD palmolein with a declared per-kilo value ranging from 15 US cents (P6.60) to 0.0103 cents (P22).

Correct value

Using the correct value of $1.18 a kilo, Trans-Asia's importers would have a total value of P2.3 billion for which it should have paid 580 million in P264.5 million.

Alvarez said that while Trans-Asia had tried to use P6.96 million with the undervaluation of its imports, the company should now pay a total of P2.2 billion, which is the sum of the dutiable values of the 17 import entries during the 14 months.

MIDDLE TEST A sample of noodles made in Japan is tested for radioactivity by Science Research Specialist 1 Ryan Mario at the PNRI's Nuclear Analytical Techniques Application Laboratory. The noodles are safe.

Time running out for 3 Filipino drug mules in China

From page A1

Christina Embrano in Makati City, Lim said. "The [death] penalty will be carried out soon or so I hear."

He said that per agreement between the two governments, the Philippines would be informed "about the actual step" and "what's the penalty will be after." Enough. "Diplomatic channels."

In a chance interview in Malacañang, President Aquino said he and foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario had been busy discussing and "preparing" for the plight of Filipinos caught in the civil unrest in the Middle East and in the nuclear crisis in Japan triggered by last week's earthquake and tsunami.

Focus on all

"At this time [Filipino drug couriers] are our concern, and so are the thousands in the Middle East and the thousands in Japan, and of course we have to be ready to meet these things all at the same time. I hope you understand that we can't focus on just one entry; we have to focus on all," Mr. Aquino said.

But he acknowledged that from the start, the government was told that the stay of executions of the three Filipinos was "temporary," and that "we have to conform to their laws."

Binay's office described Lim's announcement as "unfortunate."

The Vice President has yet to receive "official communication" on the matter from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), "but as long as the executions are not carried out, [he] remains hopeful," said his spokesperson, Joey Salgado.

But Binay himself issued a statement that "the

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ABS-CBN's YOUNG STAR ERICH GONZALES ENDORSES 'THE BIRCH TOWER' IN MALATE

Manila, Philippines (March 16, 2011) - When she won ABS-CBN's Star Circle Quest in 2008 at the tender age of 16, rising star Erich Gonzales told herself that her victory was just the dream; but the beginning of one. This Cebu-born, Davao-raised actress has worked in arduously proven that her place in the showbiz world wasn't a fluke. And in the middle of working on long shooting days for movies and TV, Erich makes sure that her home is a real refuge, and a place that is worthy of her hard-earned money. And this is why she has chosen to make her home in Mirobeni's newest development, Birch Tower, her home by the bay.

Situated in the heart of the revived, renewed and restored Malate district in Manila, The Birch Tower is one of the projects of Mirobeni Property Holdings. The Birch Tower is a reflection of their corporate push to create a cozy, elegant, yet affordable lifestyle for the hard-working Filipino, combining above-market, value-for-money facilities with designer sensibilities that one can usually find in higher-priced condominium developments.

All these can be found in 50-storey apartments located in one of Manila's most historically posh neighborhoods, with unforgettable views of Manila Bay's world-famous sunset. Centrally located along Bocobo St., the Birch Tower is just a few steps from one of the biggest malls in Manila, as well as a thriving cafe, club and party district. The Birch Tower offers convenient living near churches, schools and universities, the LRT and other business and commercial hubs.

The Birch Tower offers prospective residents their pick of several stunning and spacious designer units. A fully-furnished studio unit can range from 24.3 square meters to 30.6 square meters, while a one-bedroom unit is 42.8 square meters. The Birch Tower also has a swimming pool, gymnasium and function rooms available for residents.

The units' built-in interiors combine designer choices with long-wearing facilities, creating a look that is both bright and can stand the test of time. Units are furnished with kitchen countertops, finishes, cabinets fitted with laminated glass for durable storage, bed mattresses have water tiles that are isolated from floor to ceiling. Living rooms and bedrooms are also provided with granite tile floor finishes and ceilings with a cove finish.

Construction on the Birch Tower is ongoing with a full complement of workers active 24 hours a day. The development is expected to be fully operational by September 2012.

Mirobeni Property Holdings is very proud of the fact that The Birch Tower's condominium units are both very affordable, with better quality than industry standard. Model units are now available for viewing at the public can be finished what Mirobeni Property Holdings, Inc. has to offer. Among the projects in the pipeline is their 60 storey Royal Oak Tower, the tallest condominium ever to be constructed in the heart of Manila.

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INQUIRER

OPINION

What rush?

EDITORIAL

IT IS simply not correct to say that the impeachment case against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is being rushed. Even if we use as frame of reference the period that began when the Supreme Court rejected Gutierrez's petition for certiorari and prohibition, on Feb. 15, we cannot say that the process was compromised by a congressional rush to judgment.

In the first place, the caution that the committee on justice of the House of Representatives should have waited for the Court to rule on the matter with finality is at best a legal interpretation with political implications. But the committee's decision to proceed anyway (taken, we must emphasize the point for the benefit of those who did not follow the process closely, only after intense discussion at the committee level) is also a legal interpretation, also with political consequences—but it is a legal interpretation based on more solid ground (the interlocutory order to restrain Congress was lifted by a similar interlocutory order with similarly immediate effect), with political implications more advantageous to the public interest. Waiting for the Court to reject Gutierrez's petition with finality would have cut into the 60 session days prescribed by the Constitution for the committee to take action.

As it is, when the Court rejected Gutierrez's petition (she alleged that the impeachment complaints against her were "capricious and whimsical") with finality, it did not cite the committee for proceeding as it did. In other words, the notion that the committee should have waited for the final Court ruling was altogether ignored.

But why frame the discussion according to the day the Court lifted its controversial status quo ante order against the committee? That would benefit only the allies of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who insist on the truth-vs-judgment narrative.

The committee found the impeachment complaints filed against Gutierrez in July and then in August last year sufficient in substance only on Sept. 7. Then the Supreme Court, acting on the Gutierrez petition, stopped impeachment proceedings on Sept. 14. From that day until Feb. 15, or a total of five months, the committee did nothing. Where, we ask, is the assuredly brave due critics of Gutierrez's looming impeachment allege?

The truth is, the orderly, orderly process we have all seen on television and followed online since last month, in which the justice committee patiently dealt with the issues while delaying tactics of the Arroyo minority, insisted on following procedures by the book and finally reached overwhelming majorities on the crucial votes, only looks speedy when contrasted with the deliberate sluggishness of the ombudsman's own record.

That, ultimately, is what the impeachment process is all about: the pathetic record of an ombudsman who failed to act in the interests of justice in several high-profile corruption cases. If this were the frame of reference to be used, then Gutierrez's looming impeachment is actually very late, coming as it does years after the bungling of the Mega Pacific contract in the case for the forklifter scam, the indifference to the MRT-3 7.35 deal.

The cobbling together of the new majority in Congress, exactly like President Aquino's own presidential campaign, is based on a simple premise: That the corruption of the Arroyo years must be investigated and stopped, and the corrupt held to account. The new majority took control in July last year, how can they be accused of rushing to judgment in the case of Gutierrez when the new justice committee took several weeks to begin the impeachment process, waited five months while the Supreme Court studied the issue, then conducted reasonably paced hearings (twice or thrice a week) that were open in the minutest detail to the public, heard out both Gutierrez's side and the presentation of evidence of the complainants, before holding a vote?

Even the issue of evidence has been misinterpreted or manufactured. The task before the justice committee is roughly equivalent to that of a prosecutor: to find probable cause. The notion that the evidence must be vetted as though at a trial is mistaken. The impeachment process is the Senate's in the trial.

Congress has yet to vote on the justice committee's recommendations in plenary. An impeachment, however, seems likely. That is not proof of a rush to judgment, but a sign that the members of the new majority are listening to the people who sent them to Congress in the first place.

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Who masterminded Ortega's murder?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

A PUBLIC relations practitioner sent me a letter from former Bulacan Rapacks, trainer of former Bulacan Gov. Joel T. Reyes, one of the accused in the murder of radio journalist Gerardo Ortega, reacting to our March 7 column about the killing. I will quote the letter first, and make my comments afterwards.

He counted of former Palawan Gov. Joel T. Reyes, please allow me to comment on some points you raised in your column of 07 March 2017 regarding the assassination of radio commentator Gerardo Ortega last January in Puerto Princesa.

"1. You referred to two suggestions who, caught in the police shortly after the murder, implicated two former governors as the masterminds. But it, there was only one trigger man, a Madam Kasamaan, who never implicated Governor Reyes, or any other former governor for that matter.

"2. The sworn statement of the NBI report said that Reyes was abroad at the time that the crime was to be committed to provide him with an alibi. But then, Governor Reyes was abroad way before the crime was committed on a long planned trip to accompany his only daughter who will be studying abroad. He helped himself last and filed a plan for her to stay. To implicate otherwise would be most unfair to Governor Reyes.

"3. You stated that Mayor Edwin Ortega (brother) was 'surprised' about reports in the Manila press pointing to him as the alleged mastermind. While we have pointed out Mayor Ortega (brother) should have known in the Ortega case, are diligently unaware all news reports in media about the case and members have not even advised any item that points to Mayor Magsalon as the mastermind..."

My comments: The witness was based on an official report of the NBI signed by Director Magsaysay. It is the investigators who gave the witness statements of respondents and witnesses. Do this 1, from the statement of respondents Rodolfo Estrada Jr. (Chico) who "Retired".

"During the month of June 2008, he applied as a close-in security of former Municipality Gov. Jose Antonio N. Carreon. He worked for him as such for two years until after he lost his gubernatorial bid in the May 2010 election. He met Governor Lloyd T.I. Reyes during the time that he was the close-in security of Former Governor Carreon.

"Sometime during the last week of June 2010 in the morning, while Boston was inside the garage of the house of Governor Carreon located at No. 11 Bonita St., Marvella Park Subdivision, Barangay Dog, Carreon telephoned to him and told him, 'Boston, may pagpapatumba ako ang dalawang tao at may budget na P800,000.00 ay ito ang gagamitin ko para bayad. Sinabihan ako ng P100,000 para magpa P700,000. 'Boston clarified the word 'gagamitin' according to him was maybe mali-mali will be assassinated 'na' Carreon did not mention their names because there was no budget yet and available pictures at the moment...

"On July 4, 2010, he reminded to former Governor Carreon that T. Reyes is a close to security and he was about to request for work. Governor Reyes told him to report to Salamanca Garden, Puerto City where former Governor Reyes resided, they talked about the security of his work. Recently Governor Carreon also advised with his two bodyguards and talked with Jimmy Concepcion if there is a vacancy in Puerto Princesa."

All of these left Palawan Centrist. Reyes and Nonoy went to a mall in Makati to buy groceries. "While there former Governor Reyes asked him if Salvador Carreon maintained contact with him and if he knows the whereabouts of Salamanca and he replied 'opo meron' Governor Reyes asked him 'pwede ba kitain ko' with 'Kalibugan mawala na dami sabit' na ng ako para i-subsidize ng Governor Jose'..."

... In the middle part of December 2010, Reyes and "Boston" went to Puerto World Resort where Reyes formulated 5 between 7 and 8 p.m. where Reyes would play in the casino. At the lobby of Puerto World, former Governor Reyes mentioned again about the person to be liquidated, and at this juncture to Jimmy Concepcion Reyes gave him the amount of P150,000 in cash for mobilization of people and for the purchase of firearms and three pieces of cal. 9mm and said to him 'Ito ang pagsaryo, ito muna si Dr. Cora's Ortega."

Boston continued his statement: Sumunod bisan ako Subsidiyo and one Allan Pena, later identified as Michel Bocanegra, to do the killing. On Jan. 16, 2011, Boston brought over Cebu Pacific plane tickets for Ned, Bocanegra and a third man, Bonito Arnaiz, bound for Puerto Princesa.

On the morning of Jan. 24, 2011, Boston says a text message to Jimmy Reyes that the deputy shows dead whereabouts "and to his reply with that, the two were still on hand by near the Pet Shop Station of St. Gerry Group. Shortly after, he received a text message from Nelson Regalado telling him 'Boss sa,' then he onto a text message to former Governor Reyes informing his latter, 'OK na' and his reply was 'OK ingat.' However, Boston says, he received again a text message from Jimmy Regalado saying, 'Bad yung crosby' followed by another text from Jimmy saying, 'Subsad yung nahuli.'"

On No. 2, Bill from the media statements of Boston as quoted in the NBI report:

"...Meanwhile, former Governor Reyes together with his daughter Jackie Reyes, were abroad... On Jan. 24, 2011, Boston received a text message from Jimmy Regalado informing, 'Sinet pag-uwi ko ay napa no nag problema.' In his reply to Jimmy Reyes, he told 'Di pa' and he replied again to Boston 'Egay'."

On No. 3: If you have been monitoring the investigation, you will know that Bocanegra surrendered and volunteer debunking Reyes. I will quote Mayor Bagtasos during our conversation at the Armond's Restaurant in Quezon City. When one of the accused was asked who was the mastermind in Ortega's killing, this official replied: "Mrs. Reyes kasi si Mayor Bagtasos."

Tsunami: When fact is scarier than fiction

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE TSUNAMIS that have recently battered the globe should remind us of the fragility of our world. As Klaus Schwab, the Davos chief, explains disease and science, and the need to export nature's power and to watch.

An earthquake in New Zealand caused the end of Christmas. Political upheavals in Venezuela, Libya and Bahrain. And there are the biggest of them all, the earthquake, tsunami and explosions in a nuclear power plant in Japan. The political unrest in the world is obviously man-made and, though far away, we feel the pain and anxiety of those who are trapped in the homelands. But earthquakes are natural disasters, and we need to respect nature's power and to watch.

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The earth's spheroid in New Zealand and Japan, and the devastating tsunami that hit northern Japan, are not man-made. Earthquakes cannot be predicted or averted, and the age-old response is to prepare for when they strike. The tsunamis...given the scale of the 30-foot wall of water crashing down on the shore and swamping the Miyakoji Island in Japan—seem beyond human power to contain or control.

Significantly, both countries are wealthy with well-organized governments and civil services. With regard to Japan, I have many serious articles and blogs wondering: What are can we plan or can and getting more like Japan? The safety and regulatory[illegible] with which the Japanese people have responded to the crisis are admirable. I exercise this in the short time we encountered when "Ondoy" hit us in September 2009 and, for a few days, it was as if we were a nation without a government. Apart from individual acts of heroism and gestures of community organized aid, we were basically left to fend for ourselves, as it were, in a Hobbesian state of nature. We Filipinos of course are more to blame our many and serious problems, considering the vast natural resources left behind by the monsoon, we should learn a thing or two from how the Japanese people, on their own, have organized themselves in makeshift homes in relocation and in functional, centers. Indeed some of the pictures of their self-discipline in the face of tragedy are truly inspiring, his name is Dr. Cora's Ortega."

Boston continued his statement: Sumunod bisan ako Subsidiyo and one Allan Pena, later identified as Michel Bocanegra, to do the killing. On Jan. 16, 2011, Boston brought over Cebu Pacific plane tickets for Ned, Bocanegra and a third man, Bonito Arnaiz, bound for Puerto Princesa.

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On No. 2, Bill from the media statements of Boston as quoted in the NBI report:

"...Meanwhile, former Governor Reyes together with his daughter Jackie Reyes, were abroad... On Jan. 24, 2011, Boston received a text message from Jimmy Regalado informing, 'Sinet pag-uwi ko ay napa no nag problema.' In his reply to Boston Reyes, he told 'Di pa' and he replied again to Boston 'Egay'."

On No. 3: If you have been monitoring the investigation, you will know that Bocanegra surrendered and volunteer debunking Reyes. I will quote Mayor Bagtasos during our conversation at the Armond's Restaurant in Quezon City. When one of the accused was asked who was the mastermind in Ortega's killing, this official replied: "Mrs. Reyes kasi si Mayor Bagtasos."

Japanese people, on their own, have organized themselves in makeshift homes in relocation and in functional, centers. Indeed, having a shortage of food supplies and lacking everything at home as these stores.

But what is done by man made and man overcome is the threat coming from the explosions that are a nuclear power station, disabling the cooling system that, if we go by the explosions at Three Mile Island in the US in 1979, and Chernobyl in Russia in 1986, can cause a meltdown of the nuclear fuel. And here we are on Spratlys ground.

Yes, the Japanese public and Japan's neighboring countries, which should include the Philippines in this instance, are entitled to full and accurate information about the threat from the nuclear reactor power plants. The experience in the Japan—and there I recall the suppression of news in the Chernobyl meltdown and in China during the SARS epidemic...in that news blackouts or manipulation do not help. The problem only gets bigger when the truth is hidden from the public, and the truth inevitably comes out anyway but almost too late.

Two, not all news about situations on nuclear power is to see enough that our Constitution "adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory." It is not enough that we have established the Bataan nuclear Power Plant built by Westinghouse. If governments have a duty to disclose information to the public, the public ought to be informed enough to understand that information. We had a good scare the other day national by trusted warnings of a coming typhoon. That was good news for Mercury Drugstore and to sales of Betadine, but it exposed a public ignorant and panicky.

But I wonder if the public, even if it had been given scientifically based warnings of nuclear contagion, would have been in a position to use that information wisely and profitably, for instance, unless they have been justified by this fear of causing public panic, and the less arguments against the blackout is the assurance of a reliable and rational public—either to think of it, as other as many of the Japanese I have met have shown, courage TV.

And there, disaster preparedness shouldn't be the duty of government alone. Just like Japan, the Philippines is an archipelago. But like Japan, we are geologically vulnerable to earthquakes. Just like Japan, we have thousands of miles of coastline exposed to the onslaught of a tsunami. Yet unlike Japan, we have a history of both a hanging, mute and a fragmented civil society. Back to the Hobbesian metaphor, it is each individual for himself, and everyone else—the establishment of the communal interest...we have preserved and enhanced for private gain.

Sure it is the duty of government to help us deal with such emergencies, and we must insist—but only because we have failed in our preparedness. But look at "Ondoy" his disaster-preparedness program would have prepared us for that one. And forbid if a tsunami of the scale we saw in Japan would ever hit us, but I can't imagine our preparedness program—especially since we are notoriously not rich like Japan—that can cope with a disaster of that magnitude. We must not pretend to supplant civil society to marshal our strength.

Should the big earthquake of July 1990, the 6.8-on Richter scale eruption of July 1991, and typhoon "Ondoy" of September 2009. This is not to advocate pessimism and to celebrate worst-case-ism, but even the only government of Japan has to rely on our energy, initiative and imagination of a self-empowered citizenry.

(Comments to pasalingdiwa@gmail.com)

An apocalyptic specter

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

'Taranta'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tee

Panicking about the wrong things

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

'Annus horribilis'

LOOKING BACK

Anthony R. Cacanando

Focus on inputs, not imports

LETTERS

WILL THERE be a rice crisis in 2011? In October 2008, one was erroneously declared to take place in 2020.) Should the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority (NFA) allow rice importation, more than what they have announced—800,000 metric tons (mt) by the NFA and 668,000 by the private sector?

Government rice import targets for 2011 appear to be not in unison....from 1.5-million metric tons stated in 1.3 bmt, or 860,000 metric tons, reflecting a substantial drop (shrunk 1 bmt) from last year's level of 2.3 mmt.

We had as of Jan. 1, 2011, a bi-annual inventory of 3.4 mmt....the highest on record over a 30-year period (1980-2010). Prior to the lean months of July-September, one-to-buffer stocks were placed by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) at 1.6 mmt in 1980, 1.4 mmt in 1990, 1.5 mmt in 2000, 2.2 mmt in "crisis" laden 2008, 2.8 mmt in 2009, and 2.3 mmt in 2010. Only in 2008 did our rice stocks decline (to 68 percent of normal levels) due to El Niño, for these boomed back the following year.

We Filipinos undoubtedly are 1. to allow people who can cope with abrupt staple production changes caused by destructive typhoons and unpredictable weather.

Dissension as cause import levels beyond what was declared are premature. After all, we have not finalized any quantity as yet, to base our decisions on looming price increases, instead of a bumper harvest or domestic production would be lauded.

The country's rice stocks—even assuming the first semester rice production remains at the same level as it. El Niño-affected 2010 production....estimated at 2.8 mmt to Aug. 30, would be sufficient for 70 days' consumption; and the stocks could even go higher, to 5 mts, based on the agriculture department's production goal for the March to May 2011 palay harvest season. That would keep town stock level to 95 days (mid-October, coinciding with the main harvest season).

On the related issue of food security, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in a March 8, 2011 publication ("FAO's Initiative on Soaring Food Prices") noted that price increases in 2007, compared to 2005-2007 levels, are expected as follows: for rice by 1 percent; wheat by 2 percent; maize by 15 percent; oilseeds by 33 percent; vegetable oils by 53 percent; and sugar by 11 percent.

Rice imports have dominated the government's attention. We should move on to import dependent inputs affecting food production: fertilizer, soybeans, corn, fish meal, wheat flour, feed others, sorghum.

—SAMUEL BORDADO
Pulanai, Makati City
samuelbordado@yahoo.com

Dam to damn 500 Aeta families in Tarlac

THIS IS in reaction to the news article "Fresh Stirs a Storm" The position that is Ruling Ruling." (Inquirer, 3/9/11) The inclusion of the Ruling Ruling Dam to the list of priority projects of the private administration is a very disturbing development for the Aeta population in the area that will be submerged with the construction of the Ruling Ruling Multi-Purpose Project.

The project will displace 27 Aeta-Ita and Aeta communities consisting of more than 500 Aeta families. It will take away from their dwelling ancestral land and deprive them of their source of livelihood.

The project will also have adverse effects on the lowland communities as present by what happened when the San Roque Dam released water at the height of "Ondoy" and "Pepeng."

Superintendent Ian Dionisio sought at that time kinds of projects are implemented along anti-ordinary operations in the usage considerations. Previous administrations did this, creating up ancient flood points and affecting portions of the ancestral lands of the Aeta for decades to come.

In August 2010, soon after the assumption of President Aquino to power, the different indigenous communities nationwide submitted a memorandum to the Independent Power Agencies, Part of the agenda is the promotion of indigenous peoples and their communities from destructive projects such as large-scale mining and dams. A copy of the memorandum was submitted to Pres. Aquino. Gov. also has professed a personal advocacy of indigenous peoples' rights. But with plans such as the construction of the Ruling Ruling Dam, these statements are mere lip service.

Ian that it threatening that the present government is using its high political capital to push for projects that are detrimental to the environment and detrimental to the lives of the indigenous people. If they could have used his political capital to effect meaningful reforms to promote the collective rights of the indigenous peoples to their ancestral lands and to self-determination.

—ROBELLE ALLAGA,
Katribu Party List,
katribu_partylist@yahoo.com

Finality of judgment a thing of the past?

I WRITE on behalf of the League of Cities, in reaction to Fr. Joaquin Bernas' column titled "Misreading about orphaned laws." (Inquirer, 3/7/11)

Indeed, all Filipinos should be forewarned of the recent attitude of the justices of the Supreme Court. With the admission and cognizance of multiple motions for reconsideration (just to mention the clandestine issues cited by lawyer Estelito Mendoza urging the members to vote in favor of the 16 municipalities), the Court has altered the legal landscape—unfortunately not for the better.

With the Court's recent "flip-flopping" decision/resolutions, litigants can no longer rely on the stability of judgments. The Court has effectively removed the principle of "finality of judgment" from our jurisprudence. Litigants can now come to Court, invoking the "new" doctrine the reformed has created for the 15 municipalities.

Bernas is of the view that the Court has disqualified our issue as a "money matter". Please, the Court's compliance rate on the league's petition clearly shows its disregard of the rule of law. In Feb. 23 resolution blatantly disregarded the mandate of the Constitution and the Local Government Code, whose compulsory requirements for city/local an aspiring city must comply with.

The LGC is the mandate of the fundamental law. The rule of law must simply be obeyed and upheld at all times.

Relegated in its memoranda, the Feb. 15 resolution held that Republic Act 9009—which provides for a P100-million income requirement for towns to qualify for legislative conversion—should not be applied retroactively to the combined fifth municipalities of the nine RA 9009 was being deliberated upon by the 13th Congress). But where the 13th Congress failed to pass the orphaned bills into law, and they were re-filed in the subsequent 14th and 15th Congress, they were not supposed to be ordinarily treated as new bills. In fact, most of the orphaned bills were only filed in the 15th Congress and one was filed in the 15th Congress. There is no such thing as a "carry-over" bill. All bills are treated as new ones every time Congress opens. Mere resolutions by Congress adopting the previous orphaned bills do not make these bills "pending." RA 9009, thus, already the prevailing law, becomes applicable to the municipalities.

With due respect to Bernas, the league is the "aggrieved party" in the case. Considering that what was declared to the case to the Constitution and the Local Government Code, the issue itself has been wronged. The entire populace has been injured. The inhabitants of the cities have been cheated of their real of their right to see them the money it is done the Constitution and the rule of law.

In entertaining and reversing a final and executed decision, the Court sends the wrong signals: (a) to topic that the law does not matter; (b) people's legal rights and justice can be compromised; and (c) the Court is not bound by the implication of its Feb. 15, 2011 resolution.

—ATTY. LEO L. ROMERO, III,
mayor, San Fernando City,
national president,
League of Cities of the Philippines

So who's paying for LTO 'computer fees'?

I WISH to point out the outright lie that Land Transportation Office (LTO) Assistant Secretary Jose Arturo Tamayo Jr. committed when he said in an interview over dzBB radio station that the motorists are the ones who are paying for the computerization of the LTO's services.

Tamayo Jr. said that motorists are paying for the computerization of the LTO's services through the "convenience fee" that is being collected by the banks and other payment centers.

I wonder if Tamayo had consulted his boss, Transportation Secretary Mar Roxas, before he made that statement. Roxas, in his speech during the launching of the LTO's computerization project last Feb. 14, 2011, said that the government is paying for the computerization of the LTO's services.

Roxas said: "Ang gobyerno ang nagbabayad sa computerization ng LTO. Ang kailangan lang ay ang kooperasyon ng mga motorista sa pagpapa-renew ng kanilang mga lisensya at rehistro ng kanilang mga sasakyan."

Obviously, Tamayo Jr. is misinformed about the LTO's computerization project. Or he is deliberately misleading the public.

Tamayo Jr. should explain to the motorists why they are paying for the computerization of the LTO's services when the government is supposed to be paying for it.

—ATTY. ANTONIO T. CARPIO III,
Road Users Protection Advocates,
Unit 6, Fidanella Residences,
#156 Fidanella cor. Salas Sts.,
Barangka Ilaya Mkti., Makati City

"PRACTICALLY THE ENTIRE TACLOBAN WAS FLOODED" A resident guides a canoe in the middle of a flooded street in Tacloban City following heavy rains since Wednesday.

HUGGIN RESCUE Villagers and soldiers retrieve the body of John Paul Jordan, one of seven members of the Jordan family who died after their home was buried by mud in a landslide in Barangay Cabalawan, Tacloban City.

Landslide kills family of 7 in Leyte

From page A1

the mountain village of Cabalawan just outside Tacloban, said the office of Mayor Alfred Romualdez.

The fatalities were identified as Mario Jordan, 35; his wife Arsenia, 30; and children Marienne, 17; Angelina, 16; John Paul, 13; Julio Gary, 9; and John Kenneth, 4.

Flooding hit Tacloban as well as the towns of Palo, Sta. Fe and Kananga and Ormoc City in Leyte, displacing at least 14,000 people.

Floods also affected Maslog in Eastern Samar, Sto. Jorge in Samar and Jagna, Bilar, Dimiao and Sierra Bullones towns in Bohol.

Social welfare officer Urbian Baltazar said flooding reached more than 2 meters in Tacloban, prompting 3,000 people to take shelter at Tacloban Astrodome. She said she expected the number to rise when full reports come in.

"Practically the entire Tacloban was flooded," she told the Inquirer. At least 58 buses bound for Tacloban were stranded.

Rescue operations

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the rainfall in Tacloban since Wednesday morning was measured at 297.4 milliliter (ml), compared to the monthly level of 173.3 ml.

The flood level in Palo reached more than 2 meters, displacing 2,000 people.

"We are now undertaking rescue operations as there are still several families/kin who are trapped inside their respective houses. They could not go out due to the high level of floodwater," said Jesuchan Chiquillo, the town administrator.

A man identified as Leo Lupina was also rescued as he was leaving his flooded house in Barangay San Antonio, Chiquillo said.

2 boys missing

In Kananga town, Rizzon Mark Polinio and Rommero Canoog, both aged 7 years, were missing after they were carried away by floodwaters while swimming in Canao River on Thursday, said Mayor Elmer Codilla.

Codilla said the floods affected six barangays in Kananga: Kawayan, Municalenger, Tanjung Lilangan, Tagapay and Canao.

Sta. Fe town was placed under a state of calamity after the floods affected half of the town's 19,000 residents, according to Pedro Gidoro, a disaster operations officer.

In Ormoc City, rains also triggered floods and a landslide that destroyed 72 houses at Barangay 3, Naia Pala, affecting 339 persons.

Elvira Alcaide said she was not able to save any of her belongings.

"We ran out of our house for fear of our lives that is why we were not able to bring anything," said Alcaide, 48, who took shelter at the barangay hall along with other residents.

At least 224 families from eight waterlogged barangays in Maslog, Eastern Samar, were evacuated, information officer Gaspar Cacpa said.

Some 128 people were also relocated after floods hit Barangays Kauswagan and Sto. Tomas Norte, Bunsay, said Bey Fontan, acting civil defense regional director.

2 dead in Bohol

Floods claimed the lives of a man and a teenager and displaced at least 200 others in Bohol on Wednesday afternoon.

Bernardo Bastasario, 65, of Barangay Inocencio, fell in floodwaters while crossing a concrete box culvert in Barangay Dauis, Sierra Bullones. His body was found Thursday morning.

The other fatality was 13-year-old Rizalde Angeles of Barangay Nasingcol who was swept by floodwaters while fishing in the river of Sitio Mahayag, said Jun Acha, secretary to Sierra Bullones Mayor Alfredo Damalo. His body was found later.

The floods also affected the towns of Jagna, Bilar and Dimiao.

The Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council in Central Visayas said Barangay Nalhub in Dimiao was placed under a state of calamity after 100 people were affected by the flash flood.

The council said 10 families were also evacuated in three barangays in Jagna town—Bilangnan, Calabacero and Alejawan.

With a report from Marlon Ramos

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TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2011

MARIKINA CITY

BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 3:00AM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MEL1 1408 AND 1409

Portion of E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. (C-5) from Philsteel Road to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 4:00AM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MEL1 1210 AND 1211

Portion of Sumulong Highway from Gil Fernando Avenue to Marcos Highway, Marikina City.

TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22 - 23, 2011

MANILA CITY

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BINONDO 601

Portion of Quezon Blvd. from Nagtahan Road to Quezon Bridge, Quiapo, Manila.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT MANDALUYONG 601

Portion of Boni Avenue from Shaw Blvd. to Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT NOVALICHES 601

Portion of Quirino Highway from Tandang Sora Avenue to Regalado Avenue, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT NOVALICHES 602

Portion of Quirino Highway from Tandang Sora Avenue to Regalado Avenue, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 4:30AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS BALARA 467 AND 468

Portion of Tandang Sora Avenue from Commonwealth Avenue to Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS STA. MESA 467 – SAN JUAN 4747 AND SAN JUAN 1447

Portion of Ramon D. Fernandez and A. Pike Sts. from T. Bernardo St. (Shoemart Annex) to Corporate Building International 10 Century in Brgy. San Perfecto, San Juan City.

Portion of J. Abascal and Loop 6 Streets from N. Garcia St. to N. Domingo St. in Brgy. Pasadena, San Juan City.

Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 4:30AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS STA. MESA 467 – SAN JUAN 4747 AND SAN JUAN 1447

Portion of Tandang Sora Avenue from Commonwealth Avenue to Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS STA. MESA 467 – SAN JUAN 4747 AND SAN JUAN 1447

Portion of N. Domingo St. from A. Luna St. to Gen. Antonio Luna Street, San Juan City, Metro Manila.

Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 03/22/11) AND 5:00AM (WED., 03/23/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS STA. MESA 467 – SAN JUAN 4747 AND SAN JUAN 1447

Portion of N. Domingo St. from A. Luna St. to Gen. Antonio Luna Street, San Juan City, Metro Manila.

Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, MARCH 23 - 24, 2011

CALOOCAN CITY, QUEZON CITY AND VALENZUELA CITY

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BIGNAY-NOVA 601

Portion of Quirino Highway from Tandang Sora Avenue to Regalado Avenue, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT NOVALICHES 601

Portion of Quirino Highway from Tandang Sora Avenue to Regalado Avenue, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT NOVALICHES 602

Portion of Quirino Highway from Tandang Sora Avenue to Regalado Avenue, Novaliches, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND 4:30AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS BALARA 467 AND 468

Portion of Tandang Sora Avenue from Commonwealth Avenue to Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Quezon City.

SAN JUAN CITY AND QUEZON CITY

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT SAN JUAN 1607

Portion of Gamboa Road, Loop-Aided Section and N. Domingo St. from Ortigas Ave. to Gamboa Road, San Juan City, Metro Manila. Incl. Jose Abad Santos, Alfredo Compound and Ridge Commercial in Brgy. Corazon De Jesus and Addition Hills, San Juan City.

Portion of Ortigas Ave. Extension and E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. from Don Mariano Marcos Avenue (Mindanao Avenue) to Luzon Avenue, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT STA. MESA 467

Portion of Ramon D. Fernandez and A. Pike Sts. from T. Bernardo St. (Shoemart Annex) to Corporate Building International 10 Century in Brgy. San Perfecto, San Juan City.

Portion of J. Abascal and Loop 6 Streets from N. Garcia St. to N. Domingo St. in Brgy. Pasadena, San Juan City.

Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (WED., 03/23/11) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (THU., 03/24/11) – PORTION OF CIRCUITS STA. MESA 467 – SAN JUAN 4747 AND SAN JUAN 1447

Portion of N. Domingo St. from A. Luna St. to Gen. Antonio Luna Street, San Juan City, Metro Manila.

Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

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Portion of Polaris and Loop 1 Streets from Gen. Antonio Luna Street to Gen. Ordonez Street, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2011

BATANGAS (BATANGAS CITY)

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 5:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MAHABANG PARANG 3467 AND MALVI – ROLLBOM 1602 AND 1603

Portion of Malvi and Diego Silang Streets from Gen. Malvar Street to Gen. Luna Street, Batangas City.

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 5:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MAHABANG PARANG 3467 AND MALVI – ROLLBOM 1602 AND 1603

Portion of Malvi and Diego Silang Streets from Gen. Malvar Street to Gen. Luna Street, Batangas City.

BATANGAS (BATANGAS CITY)

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 5:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MAHABANG PARANG 3467 AND MALVI – ROLLBOM 1602 AND 1603

Portion of Malvi and Diego Silang Streets from Gen. Malvar Street to Gen. Luna Street, Batangas City.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2011

QUEZON CITY

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS QUEZON CITY 1345 AND STA. MESA 207

Portion of Quezon Ave. from Timog Ave. to Edsa (in consortia Timog, St. Ange, Kamuning, Victory Ave., Bonanza, Paseo, Sandoval, Ma. Clara, Jardin Del, Santo Rosa, Mariposa, Sto. Cristo, Florence Gardening Site), and Victory Ave. to Edsa.

Portion of Kamias Ave. from Quezon Ave. to Del Monte Ave. including Edsa Roosevelt (in Sto. Nio and Sampaguita Ave., PNR College in Brgy. Bagong Pag-asa).

Portion of Kamias Ave. from Del Monte Ave. to Col. Bonifacio including Edsa Roosevelt (in Sto. Nino, Sampaguita Ave., PNR College in Brgy. Bagong Pag-asa).

Portion of Edsa and G. Araneta Ave. from Kamias Ave. to Epifanio de los Santos Ave. including Edsa Roosevelt (in Sto. Nino, Sampaguita Ave., PNR College in Brgy. Bagong Pag-asa).

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS MAHABANG PARANG 3467 AND MALVI – ROLLBOM 1602 AND 1603

Portion of Malvi and Diego Silang Streets from Gen. Malvar Street to Gen. Luna Street, Batangas City.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2011

MANILA (MALATE)

BETWEEN 5:00AM AND 5:30AM AND THEN BETWEEN 2:00PM AND 2:30PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT TONDO 678

Portion of Juan Luna St. from Antares St. to and including Lola Maria Guadalupe Jr. Ave. (in Tondo) and Portion of Antares St. from Juan Luna St. to and including Lola Maria Guadalupe Jr. Ave. (in Tondo) and Portion of Lola Maria Guadalupe Jr. Ave. from Juan Luna St. to and including Antares St. (in Tondo).

BULACAN (SAN ILDEFONSO AND SAN RAFAEL)

BETWEEN 5:00AM AND 5:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 11:00PM AND 11:59PM – PORTIONS OF CIRCUIT CRUZ NA DAAN 12154

Portion of Cagayan Valley Road from Cruz Na Daan Area (Cruz Na Daan Crossing, San Rafael to and including Mic Area) from Cruz Na Daan Crossing, San Rafael to and including Mic Area, Cruz Na Daan and Mandalupon (San Rafael

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bengcoño

Joker: Leave autonomy alone

JOKER ARROYO

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. JOKER Arroyo yesterday vowed to oppose the Malacañang-backed move to postpone elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), telling Palace officials to leave the autonomous region alone.

"My position is very simple. The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is autonomous. Why is the national government interfering with its affairs?" he told reporters.

The House of Representatives was close to approving a plenary bill postponing the ARMM elections until synchronizing them with the 2013 elections.

The move was akin to the Christian majority dictating on the Muslim minority when to hold their elections, he said.

> 'Imagine, the Christian majority will tell the Muslim minority when the elections will be held ... and the Christian majority will appoint the OICs?'

Christian majority decision

"Imagine, the Christian majority will tell the Muslim minority when the elections will be held ... and the Christian majority will appoint the OICs (officers in charge). Postponement of the elections will be synonymous to non-autonomy," he said.

Arroyo recalled that he and other members of the Senate had deferred to Muslim lawmakers on matters concerning their constituents.

"You know, when will we ever let them alone? To judge and decide for themselves? Again they will use the guise of synchronized elections so that they can appoint an OIC. OIC would not be the choice of the ARMM people," he said.

In Malacañang, officials said President Aquino would consult the people of ARMM who to appoint as OIC there if Congress passed the bill postponing the elections, which he had certified as urgent.

"This is not going to be a dictatorial process," said spokesperson Edwin Lacierda.

Past violators

According to a lawyer in ARMM and an expert on autonomy, three former presidents had already violated the law that created ARMM by agreeing to postpone elections there in the past.

Lawyer Ernie Maserang, ARMM regional Cabinet secretary said, however, that it was up to the Supreme Court to decide if a case was filed against the Malacañang-backed plan to postpone ARMM elections in August.

The elections have been postponed six times: Former presidents Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Records from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) showed that since the establishment of ARMM, only two elections were held on schedule—the first in 1996 and in 2008.

Republic Act No. 6734 was the original law that created the ARMM in 1987. RA 9054 amended the law and expanded the ARMM to its current territory.

During a visit here earlier this month, Interior Secretary Lulu de Lima has reiterated that postponing the elections has legal basis.

Bad precedent

A top election lawyer, however, said the Palace move to postpone ARMM elections and appoint officers in charge would set a bad precedent.

Lawyer Romulo Macalintal, in a statement, said local and national officials could use the ARMM case to justify an extension of their terms as well.

"The practice of postponing elections is not healthy for our electoral processes," said Macalintal. "The same might happen when even the 2013 elections or the 2016 elections would also be postponed to extend the terms of office of senators or the President."

"They would just come up with whatever reasons they want to postpone the elections," he said.

He said Mr. Aquino might have been ill-advised on the postponement of elections in ARMM.

Continued intervention

Catholic priest Glaso Mercado Jr., executive director of the Institute of Autonomy and Governance, said "officials in the ARMM had been over-right to 11 times if you count the last weeks or months of extension of the incumbents."

Mercado, a recognized expert on autonomy blamed "the continued congressional interventions of setting and resetting elections in the ARMM which are mandated by the principle of autonomy and self-determination and the spirit and letter of the Organic Act."

Maserang said the Organic Act is not an ordinary law. It was approved by the people in a plebiscite.

"There is no better option but to follow the rule of law by holding the scheduled elections in August," Mercado said.

Bay Sumalipao, Comelec ARMM director, said as far as Comelec is concerned, the elections would push through in August.

"There's no law passed by Congress for the postponement, as yet (in relation to) the holding of the elections continues," he said.

With reports from Christine Avendaño in Manila, and Charlie Señase, Noah Macabato and Audrey Alstrom, Inquirer Mindanao

Awards for 2 honest cops

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The city government of Bian, Laguna, will be giving awards to two policemen who returned ₱500,000 in cash and checks and goods stolen from a bus mill, police said Thursday.

PDG Grupito Antonio Jr. and PO1 Herbert Ortiz responded to a report that a thief has entered the Queen Elizabeth Rice Mill in Barangay San Antonio past midnight on Sunday, said Supt. Joel Pereña, Bifan city police chief.

The two caught Emanuel Sarmiento, 27, a truck helper who had just stolen cash and goods at the rice mill. Sarmiento surrendered ₱107,000 in cash and ₱402,000 in checks and other goods he took from the rice mill.

The two policemen received recognitions for heroism during ceremonies on Monday. Marivar Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Good Governance, and Genuine Peace and Development in the ARMM Now!

We, civil society organizations of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) united within the Reform ARMM Now Coalition (RAN), assert that the ARMM election must be postponed and synchronized with the May 2013 midterm elections.

The ARMM election is originally scheduled on August 8, 2010. The wisdom of the synchronization proposal is expressed in House Bill 4146, which is currently deliberated in Congress.

The Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council last February 28 made the ARMM election synchronization a priority legislative measure. Hence, HB 4146 is certified as an urgent bill in both the House of Representatives and Senate.

For good governance, peace and development to take place in the ARMM, the region has to restart clean. Initiatives, plans and programs towards these ends should take their full course and not be sidetracked by a showcase of political maneuvering, violence and election-rigging, the outcome of which might bring more uncertainty than stability to the region.

The national government should be given sufficient time to conduct audit of the P27.005 billion funds allocated to the ARMM from 2008 to 2010, including millions of dollars in foreign assistance from international development partners. There has to be a cleansing process. We should find out where the money went and who benefitted.

We commit ourselves to ensuring that the implementation of programs and projects funded by ARMM's development partners to alleviate the plight of poor families in the region (which in 2009 has reached 218,043) will not be adversely affected by the postponement of elections.

A thorough campaign must ensue against partisan armed groups operating in the region, along with other concrete measures implemented by the national government to address the alarming and increasing incidence of criminality and insurgency in the region.

In addition, the deferment of the ARMM elections will provide greater leeway for the ongoing peace negotiations between the government, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front and the implementation of the 1996 final peace agreement with the latter.

We believe that to enable the government to fulfill and implement its "Daang Matuwid" vision for ARMM, we should allow reforms to take place, start a clean slate, and prepare the region and its people for an orderly transfer of power and resources to its duly-elected officials in 2013.

Bangsamoro Lawyers Network (BLN) • Bangsamoro Solidarity Movement (BANGSA)
Bangsamoro Women's Solidarity Forum for Peace and Development Inc. (BSWSMPDI)
Bangon Taasig! – Minority Rights Forum • Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS)
Citizens Coalition for ARMM Electoral Reforms (C-CARE) • Iranun Development Council (IDC)
Islamic Movement for Electoral Reforms and Good Governance (IMERGG)
Mindanao People's Caucus (MPC) • Mindanao Alliance for Peace (MAP) • Mindanao Peace Solidarity (MPS)
Maranao People's Development Center (MARADECA)
Magindanao Network of Organizations (MAGNETO) Moro Human Rights Center • Kadtuntaya Foundation Inc.
Kahapon Foundation Inc. • Organization of Teduray and Lambangian Conference (OTLAC)
Teduray Lambangian Women's Organization • Young Maranao for Peace and Development (YMPD)
Ranao Youth for Peace and Development • Sentro sa Alternatibong Lingap Pandgal (SALIGAN)-Mindanao
Siad Initiatives in Mindanao Convergence for Asset Reform and Regional Development (SIMCARRD)
Alternative Center for Organizational Reforms and Development (ACORD) – Bandu
Ansibars Bangsamoro People's Association (ABPA)
Building Alternative Rural Resource Institutions and Organizing Services (BARRIOS)
Magsaysay Center for PALMA Inc. • Solidarity for Peace Empowerment and Equity-led Development (SPEED)
WKDTV-Al Jamaliah Organization • Bangsamoro Lawyers Network (BLN)
Bangsamoro Solidarity Movement (BANGSA) • Bangsamoro Center for Just Peace, Inc. (BCJP)
Sindow ko Kalilintad • United Youth for Peace and Development (UNYPAD)
United Youth of the Philippines (UNIPHIL-Women) • Mindanao Alliance for Peace (MAP)
Maranao Youth for Peace and Development (MYPD) • Orenguan a MGA Bai sa Ranao (OBAERA Inc.)
Inangka ko Kalilintad • Anakan • Orenguan a mga Tagibaok sa Ranao (OTR) Inc.
Bangsamoro Youth League (BYL) • Al Amin • Suwara Mindanao, Inc.
Muslim Mindanao Ulama Council • Pangsal Anti Poverty Foundation to Muslim Mindanao
Amanah, Inc • Lanao Muslim Professionals (LMP) • Lanao Youth for Peace and Development (LYPD)
Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Program (SSEAYP-Batch 2009) BALANGAY Inc.
Geared Young Volunteers Enthusiasts (GYVES) • Ulangig Mindanao
Tuburg Lupaog • Change Politics Movement • Community Organizers Multiversity in Mindanao
DAWAT Inc. • Sulu Aid Inc • Lupah Sug Bangsamoro Women
Bongao Electric Cooperative • Basilan Ulama Council
Sulu Ulama Council for Peace and Development • Muslim Association Lupaog
Mindanao Center for Women's Welfare and Development • Kamapan sa Banao Center, Inc.
Philippine Muslim Solidarity Movement

EX-MAYOR FUMES AT OMBUDSMAN

Duterte offers impeachment testimony

DAVAO CITY—Vice Mayor Rodrigo Duterte fired back at Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, and vowed to actively participate in the impeachment proceedings against her.

Duterte, who admitted to being aghast at Gutierrez, said he is in consultation with some lawmakers and his lawyers on the possibility of his participation in the trial to impeach Gutierrez into the Ombudsman's list of graft and corruption charges against him.

DUTERTE

GUTIERREZ

Angry man

"I was being asked if I want to testify on the Ombudsman's ignorance of the law and her being oppressive. Apparently, she is incompetent and that has been proven when she used the line of law lawyers and investigators," Duterte's spokesman in an exclusive interview.

The "ignorance" of Gutierrez, he said, was best illustrated when she revoked Republic Act No. 3448, which created the Special Education Fund (SEF), in the case against Duterte and 16 other officials of the city.

The 1969 law, Duterte said, has already been amended by Presidential Decree 1509 on July 1, 1984.

The amended law Duterte was referring to says funds "...accruing to the Local School Board shall be used for the salary adjustment, allowances and other fringe benefits of local and national public school teachers, in addition to other purposes mentioned in said SEF."

The charges against them, he said, is based on "a law that was, second and relevant portions of which have either been repealed or amended."

Charges

"I am aghast ... what I want now is to say: I would like to show to the people and the Filipino nation that Gutierrez is," Duterte said.

The case against Duterte stemmed from the alleged misuse and misuse of P12.3 million in calamity fund allocation in 2006, when he was still mayor. Gutierrez said the funds were supposed to be spent for the SEF program but were diverted to Duterte's "Paladpad sa Mayor" gift-giving program done every Christmas season.

"The Ombudsman is part of the oppression," he said.

In the resolution approved Feb. 28, the Ombudsman said Duterte used his command "acted with evident bad faith or gross inexcusable negligence."

Duterte said the amount was spent for the party of at least 7,000 public school teachers Christmas of 2006.

"They were given P1,000 cash each. They were divided into four sessions because it's festival in a party and they were busy with gifts," Duterte said.

"How can you believe this complaint?" Duterte added.

"I am aghast. I cannot even proclaim it. I cannot even fathom the level of stupidity of the Ombudsman and the people around her. She should have read the law previously. She should have studied that she is bound by the decision of the people several times," he said.

Used by politicians

The problem with the Ombudsman are not institution, he said, in that it allowed itself to be used by politicians.

Before the elections last year, the camp of former Speaker Prospero Nograles, the political nemesis of Duterte, exposed the alleged overspending use of the P1.2 million SEF funds.

Former Mayor Benjamin de Guzman, one of the prominent members of Team Nograles, said charges against Duterte were "nuisance."

"They should realize that this is not funny and be political. Here you begin to suspect that his impeachment before did not push through because Nograles was supporting her in the vice Speaker of the House," Duterte said. —Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

Group to file suit vs P-Noy EO on LGU tax

By Dellie T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA, CITY—A citizens' group in Quezon will challenge the legality of President Aquino's executive order stopping local officials from collecting P6.1 billion in alleged unpaid taxes from the operators of a coal-fired power plant in Dalahican town according to officials.

Lawyer Vicente Ayon, legal consultant of Gov. David Suarez, said he has met with the group and they are currently studying all legal aspects of Mr. Aquino's EO.

"They are ready to take in filing a case in court to test the validity of the order," he said.

Mr. Ayon, however, sought to distance the group's plan from the provision, stating Suarez was not inclined to question the order.

Suarez said he would pursue the collection of taxes despite the President's EO. Team Energy, the operator of the plant, said in an earlier statement that Quezon officials were fumbling on the wrong end on the tax case.

THE POSTCARD pretty rice terraces of Ifugao have been classified by Unesco as among the endangered world heritage sites. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY ART CAMPOS

Preservation of Ifugao terraces forgotten by gov't, execs lament

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY, Benguet, Philippines—Officials of Ifugao lamented the supposed lack of support from other national government agencies in efforts to preserve the rice terraces as a World Heritage Site.

Ifugao Rep. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said lack of efforts to save the Ifugao rice terraces has been observed by the provincial and town governments through the help of groups from the provincewide.

"It seems that Ifugao terraces preservation is among the last of the national government's priorities," he said.

On Tuesday, a 12-member team led by Alexandra Pellegrinetti, of the World Monuments Fund (WMF) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), began a 10-day activity to check on the state of the rice terraces.

The activity, which included site visits and discussions with the provincewide, aims to determine whether the Ifugao terraces can now be removed from Unesco's list of "World Heritage Sites in Danger," and regain full status as a World Heritage Site.

The Philippine Cordillera—the 2,000-year-old Ifugao rice terraces. There are in Banaue and listed in Banaue, Hungduan in Kiangan, and in Mayoyao and Hungduan.

Baguilat's petition was supported by Gov. Eugene Balitang, who said the national government has no unwanted and regular support to help save the rice terraces.

"We have not received any regular allotment. Funds allotted for projects were provided by foreign donors, not Filipinos, and those were based on project proposals we submitted," he said.

Banaue declared the Ifugao rice terraces as a heritage site in 1995 and as a "priceless consideration of Philippine ancestors to humanity."

It said the rice terraces "represent an enduring illustration of an ancient civilization that surpassed various challenges and setbacks posed by modernization."

In 2001, however, the rice terraces were listed by Unesco's WMF as among the "endangered" heritage sites after calculations revealed their rapid destruction caused by soil erosion, dwindling irrigation and abandonment by farmers.

Ifugao officials saw the inclusion in the endangered list as "an unwanted tool for marketing effective, decisive and rapid intervention for effective saving the terraces from the sun."

The WMF team is visiting the terraces to validate "significant progress" and the "corrective measures" that have been carried out on the terraces, as noted by the WMF in its 2010 State of Conservation Report.

The report said more than 50 percent of the damaged terraces has been restored through the conservation programs pushed for by the provincial, town and barangay governments, along with a number of nongovernment organizations.

Baguilat, a former Ifugao governor and Kongsi mayor, said if the WMF monitoring team would focus on the Ifugao people's preservation efforts despite the limited national government support, the terraces would be removed from the endangered list.

"It has years of involvement in their preservation requirements for the terraces. I can say that the delisting is really in the hands of our people, not Unesco or the tourists. If it is no longer important to Ifugao, then definitely the terraces will cease to exist," the chairman of Ifugao said.

No national government agency is tasked with pooling efforts for the preservation of the terraces, Baguilat said. In 2002, Malacañang abolished the Ifugao Terraces Commission and the Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force.

HOMETOWN *Snapshot*

122 mayors back city bids of 21 towns, but firm vs 16 in SC case

CELEBRATION CITY—Opposition to the Supreme Court's fourth "flip-flop" on the conversion of 16 towns into cities has spread here even as a group of 122 city mayors said it was supporting the cityhood of 21 other towns because their conversion was not illegal.

Mayor Rodolfo Gatmaitan led a prayer and protest rally here on Monday, becoming the latest critic of the ruling on the cityhood of 16 municipalities in the country.

Speaking before some 1,000 people, Gatmaitan said the Supreme Court needs to reconsider its ruling.

"It's like rehearing a dead criminal who was condemned to death," said Gatmaitan in the English he talks.

He said the 16 towns have not met the requirements for conversion into cities.

In a statement, the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) said it was endorsing the 21 towns that have met requirements to become cities under the Local Government Code.

Samuel Co, mayor of Bogabo City and LCP vice president for Mindanao, said the LCP, a group of 122 city mayors, would like him to oppose the conversion into cities that do not qualify for the status.

Co said LCP supports the cityhood of Calapnan and San Pedro in Laguna; Cainta, Taytay and Binangonan in Rizal; Bacoor, General Trias, Imus, Carmona and Silang in Cavite; Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija; Calaca, Batangas and Naujan in Batangas; Meycauayan in Bulacan; and Mandaluyong, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Marikina, Malabon, San Juan and Navotas in Metro Manila.

These municipalities, he said, have met the most important requirement to become cities—locally-generated income of P20 million.

"Some 122 mayors population deserve cityhood status, unlike the 16 that encountered the ... law," Co said.

"We are not against the conversion of the 16 towns into cities for as long as it follows the process," said Gatmaitan.

Carlo Aganon, Inquirer Mindanao

SC justice's 'sub judice' opinion stirs debate

DAVAO CITY—Would the people's right to know be affected if the sub judice rule is applied?

In a separate opinion on a contempt ruling against anti-crime volunteer Lourdes Jimenez, Supreme Court Justice Arturo Brion pointed out the "growing disregard and misbehaviours" of the sub judice rule, to the detriment of the rights of the accused, the integrity of the courts, and, ultimately, the administration of justice.

"The resulting [but temporary] curtailment of speech because of the sub judice rule is necessary," Brion said in his opinion.

Two lawyers asked to comment on the Brion opinion said the right to know, however, is superior over the subjudice rule.

Carlos Zarate, a prominent lawyer here, said while he agrees that media should respect rules on the merits of a case, particularly the ongoing trial of key members of the Ampatuan clan for the Nov. 23, 2009 Maguindanao Massacre, the sub judice rule should not affect freedom of the press.

"If the reporting is only about how the trial went through, that is not sub judice," Zarate said.

Lawyer Harry Roque, on the other hand, said members of the prosecution panel have agreed to "talk only about the facts of the case," and not of the merits because they were conscious of the sub judice rule. —Jaymee Ahadiones

Nuclear crisis in Japan alarms US, other nations

From page A1

that the damage to at least one crippled reactor was much more serious than Tokyo had acknowledged.

Agonizing choice

Jacobs's testimony, the most extended comments by a senior US official on Japan's nuclear disaster, described what amounts to an agonizing choice for Japanese authorities: keeping workers into an increasingly contaminated area in a last-ditch effort to cool nuclear fuel with water, or do more to protect the workers but risk letting the fuels heat more—and possibly touch off a broader meltdown.

Jacobs advised Americans to stay much further away from the Fukushi plant than the perimeter established by Japanese authorities.

Jacobs's statements came as operat a new and ominous display in the six-day fight of how by Japanese engineers to bring six side-by-side nuclear reactors under control after their cooling systems were knocked out by an earthquake and a tsunami last Friday.

Ineffective

On the ground and in the air around the stricken Daiichi plant, 220 kilometers northeast of Tokyo, Japan's Self-Defense Forces dumped water from a helicopter on the No. 3 reactor on Thursday morning, making several passes as a plume of white smoke billowed.

But the ineffective nature of the tool to keep down heat from the reactor's spent fuel, the 10th breakwater said.

Moments earlier, police in white camera trucks, attempting to get within 50 meters of the No. 3 reactor, had been forced back by high levels of radiation in the same area.

Tokyo Electric Power Co., which operates the stricken plant, also was working to complete a high power line to the plant to restore the electricity needed to make cooling systems.

Both the Self-Defense Forces and the Tokyo Fire Department have planned to deploy water cannons at the No. 3 reactor on Thursday, hoping to deliver some 42 tons of water—eight tons less than the government had said earlier that the unit needed on a typical day to keep the fuel rods from overheating.

Most startling

Jacobs's most startling assertion was that there was now little or no water in the spent fuel pool in the No. 4 reactor of the Daiichi nuclear plant, leaving fuel rods stored there exposed and bleeding radiation into the atmosphere.

In a week, he said, "We believe that radiation levels are extremely high, which could possibly impact the ability to take corrective measures."

His statement was notably low-key relative to the alarm that had gripped many Japanese, who have lost confidence in the government's ability to manage the crisis.

Jacobs also stressed that high radiation fields were going to make it very difficult to maintain any people work at the plant where the crippled reactor needed to remain covered with water at all times.

If the American analysis is accurate, and emergency crews at the plant have been unable to keep the spent fuel at that temperature source properly cooled, radiation levels would make it deadly hard to bring the problem at the No. 4 reactor and restoring the other troubled reactors.

In the worst case, engineers say, emergency workers would be forced to evacuate the plant altogether, and the fuel rods in reactor and spent fuel pools would be left to melt down, leading to much larger releases of radioactive materials.

While radiation levels at the plant have varied tremendously, Jacobs said that the area's overall trend "would be [that] within a fairly short period of time."

He added that another spent fuel pool at the No. 3 reactor might also be losing water, and could soon be in the same condition.

80-km radius, not just 20

On Wednesday, the US Embassy in Tokyo, on advice from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, told Americans to evacuate a radius of "approximately 50 miles"—about 80 kilometers—from the Fukushima plant.

The advice to Americans in Japan represents a severe inconvenience for the risk in the immediate vicinity of the Daiichi plant than the warnings made by the Japanese themselves, who have told everyone within 20 kilometers to evacuate, and those within 20 to 30 kilometers to take shelter.

"We would recommend an evacuation to a much larger radius than has currently been provided to Japan," Jacobs said.

That statement came moments as underscored, if not more, Japanese officials, suggesting they have misunderstood the danger or deliberately played down the risks.

Frozen leadership

It was not immediately clear how many people live within the zone around the plant that the US officials believed should be evacuated. But the zone gets far closer to the city of Sendai, with its population of one million, which took the brunt of the earthquake last week.

US officials also have been dealing with their Japanese counterparts across that the country's political and bureaucratic leadership has appeared frozen in place, unwilling to communicate clearly about the accident's scope and, in some cases, unwilling to accept outside assistance.

Two US officials said they believed that the Japanese government itself was not getting a clear picture from Tokyo Electric.

"Everything in their system is built to build consensus slowly," said one American official.

No radiation alert at Naia

By DJ Yap and Kristine L. Alave

NO RADIATION alert has been raised at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), and arriving passengers from Japan are not subject to any special health checks, quarantine officers at the airport said yesterday.

"We don't have a Geiger counter," said Dr. Michiko Miranda, a quarantine medical officer, referring to the equipment that measures radiation levels.

But he said his agency was open to the possibility of borrowing one from the Department of Health's (DoH) disposal.

Michiko said the bureau of Quarantine saw no need for any radiation check on arriving passengers "unless Japan itself announces a radiation alert."

Radiation exposure usually manifests symptoms on nausea and vomiting, is not a contagious disease, and contact with an affected person generally does not pose risks, he said.

Dr. Miranda said someone with radiation sickness would have to be exposed on an open source for the person's health. "The quarantine is for that person's well-being, as radiation sickness has high fatality rates," he said.

He said the body temperature checks remained in place at the airport through thermal scanners.

Arriving passengers also have to fill out forms inquiring about whether they have experienced fever, sore throat, cough, body aches/pains, headache or diarrhea. They are given a checkup if they show any of these signs.

People scared

Rena Sadre, 30, who arrived in Manila yesterday from Japan, said almost everyone in Japan was covered up, wearing facial masks and caps. "That's what we were told on the news, everyone in the airport was wearing masks," she said.

"It's really scary. Everyone is frightened about the radiation. I don't want to come back but my husband is there," said Sadre, who works for a food company in Sendai prefecture.

Flights on schedule

On Thursday, 18 flights to and from Japan were on schedule, with none bound for or arriving from Narita (Tokio) delayed or diverted.

Immigration officials at Naia said they saw no significant increase in arrivals from Japan, despite reports that foreigners and Japanese were leaving Japan in droves.

The new head of the airport operations division of the Bureau of Immigration, lawyer Lina Pelo, said there had been no additional inbound flights from Japan since the three-fold disaster of quake, tsunami and nuclear plant explosions hit the country.

"Thursday, before hitting Southern California late Friday

Blowing to the Pacific

Philippine weather officials said winds flowing from Japan to the Pacific Ocean would be the dominant weather system in the region until mid-May.

Health and nuclear experts emphasize that radiation in the plume will be diluted as it travels and, as waves, would have extremely minor health consequences in the United States, even if litters of it are ultimately detectable.

In a similar way radiation from a 15-megaton disaster in 1986 spread around the globe and reached the West Coast of the United States in 10 days, its levels measurable but minuscule.

The nuclear plant in Fukushima, Japan, sustained damage after a 9-magnitude offshore earthquake hit the northeast region last Friday.

The quake, one of the world's strongest, spawned a tsunami that hit the Daiichi nuclear plant and damaged its main power systems and backup generators. There were staggered reports as to the reactors.

Country safe

Even if the nuclear power plant melts down, the Philippines is a remote-case scenario, the Philippines being 3,300 km away from the Daiichi plant, would be safe from any radioactive plume."

Abatayada dela Rosa, head of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI), declared the Philippines being clearly from Fukushima would spread and disperse to the Pacific Ocean, reducing its intensity.

As the nuclear plume travels away from Japan and into the Pacific Ocean, its concentration would be diluted, dela Rosa said.

She said the Philippines was out of any plume's path. "No radioactive plume will reach Philippine territorial seas within the next 120 hours which requires offsite response and monitoring measures to do so, Dr. Aquino said.

But the President said that his government was not organizing Filipinos from Japan.

"The repatriations and the evacuation will rest on the assessment of our ambassador in Japan, who has been sending reports to assess the conditions of our countrymen all over Japan," Mr. Aquino said.

"There is a land God we can draw from (the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration) but that is not an inexhaustible fund," he said, pointing out that Filipinos to each evacuee as the Middle East also were facing difficulties.

"We have to prioritize who gets the most assistance," he added.

Not a rebuff

Presidential spokesperson Ricky Carandang said Filipinos should not take it as a rebuff if the Japanese authorities are taking a while to respond to the Philippine offer.

"They're dealing with a disaster from the earthquake. They're dealing with tsunami, they're dealing with the nuclear explosion in Fukushima," Carandang told a news briefing.

"There are 91 countries at last count who have offered assistance to Japan. I think we should give them time to decide which one they will accept, which one they will not, what kind of help they would accept... We're ready to offer assistance within our means. It should not be taken as a rebuff if they have not accepted our offer but," he said.

Pinoys in Japan 'not balikbayan boxes'

By Jerry E. Esplanada

ANYING FILIPINOS who want to leave Japan are "not balikbayan boxes," militant group yesterday assailed President Aquino's plan to use its one-and-only C-130 plane to fly them home.

Renato Reyes Jr., secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said, "surely, the Aquino administration can do better."

"It can get chartered flights from Philippine airlines and Cebu Pacific to help Filipinos in Fukushima evacuate. Isn't a C-130 a cargo plane? Are they planning to fly Filipinos out of Japan like balikbayan boxes?" Reyes told the bayanan.

"The Palace statement that Filipinos who have no means can join the C-130s of the Air Force is definitely not enough."

He said the government "should exert its best efforts and should have a concrete plan."

"It should also allocate emergency funds for the repatriation of Filipinos from Japan. The funds should also include provisions for food and relief goods since they are also in dire need supply for 90 days there," he asserted.

Millions for DFA travel

John Leonard Monterona, regional coordinator of the Migrante-based Migrante-Middle East, wondered if the government was really ready.

"Based on our affiliate organizations worldwide there is widespread outrage over the claim of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) that it has no funds for the repatriation of Filipinos fleeing Japan.

The DFA has apparently forgotten that Filipinos in Japan, who number 265,000, send over $800 million a year in remittances to the Philippines, Monterona said.

Embassy team blasted

A group of Filipinos residents in Sendai, one of the areas hardest hit by the March 11 quake and tsunami, expressed "deep rage and great disappointment" over the slow and inefficient team sent to the area by the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo.

"The first team from our embassy arrived here on the night of March 13, the time when other foreign nationals were starting to evacuate from Sendai," the group said in a statement.

"The team came to Sendai without a concrete contingency plan."

Clearly, members of the team were "not only unprepared, they also lacked the necessary skills" to handle an evacuation program, the students said.

"We demand a sense of urgency from our government. We demand that the government enhance all means to surpass the incompetent actions of the Philippine contingent here in Japan. Act now!" they said.

Oust Lopez call

Student Pinoy Migrante-Japan spokesperson, called for the immediate recall and replacement of Philippine Ambassador to Tokyo Manuel Lopez.

Lopez has angered Filipinos in Japan for proposing the evacuation of embassy personnel and their dependents, Pinoy said.

Lopez has denied he requested evacuation for his staff.

Japan: PH search/rescue team must be self-sufficient

From page A1

Great Sendai Earthquake and Tsunami of 2011.

He said Romulo told him that he was still waiting for word from his home office on "modalities" of the Philippine offer made last week.

"Until he gets word from the home office, he can't advise us ... There are certain specifications that their home office should be issuing so that the people would become a help and not more of a burden," Mr. Aquino told reporters.

"They did mention that that part of Japan would have very few English speakers (if) we'll send that team over there, they'd have to be self-sufficient to include some shelter, food and shelter."

Winter chill

The President said the Japanese ambassador also said it was very cold at this time in that part of Japan.

"So if in case we should prepare, these are the conditions that will face us, since if we do send the rescuers there, I think that is what is meant by modalities," Mr. Aquino said.

The C-130 airplane that is to ferry rescue workers and relief goods to Japan will provide a free ride home for Filipinos who want to leave Japan but don't have the

ACTING Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario (right) says the Japanese government will give the advisory to the Philippine government to evacuate its nationals during Thursday's press conference. At left is Assistant Foreign Secretary Ed Malaya.

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SOLAR CAR Federico Lopez, chair of the Philippine Solar Car Challenge Society, shows the design of the country's third solar car at De La Salle University in Manila during yesterday's launching. The solar car will be sent to the annual world solar car race in Australia in April. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

RH backers to blame for bill's delay, antis claim

By Cynthia D. Balana

OPPONENTS of the reproductive health (RH) bill in the House of Representatives yesterday said its proponents should stop whining about the delay in the plenary deliberation on the measure because it was not urgent.

Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing was instigating a statement by Minority Leader Edcel Lagman that legislators like Bagatsing and Deputy Speaker Raul Daza, who were opposed to House Bill No. 4244, were not ready to jumpstart the sponsorship.

"Don't blame us because your group questioned the quorum in the ARMM plenary debates yesterday. That was why the RH bill was not discussed," Bagatsing said in an interview with the reporters, referring to Lagman.

Lagman lashed out from the RH debate on the floor on Wednesday as the proposed postponement of the elections to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was discussed.

Lack of quorum

Only five antiprocreation congressmen so far had been able to interpellate the sponsors of the postponement bill when the deliberations was cut short after Davao del Sur Rep. Mark Douglas Cagas, a member of the minority, questioned the quorum since there were less than 50 congressmen present.

As a result, Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III adjourned the session, with 17 interpellations scheduled to ask their questions on the ARMM bill on Monday.

"Had he (Cagas) not questioned the quorum, they could have finished the debates and voted on the ARMM bill but it was a member of his [Liberal Party] group who raised the question of quorum. So it affected the schedule and the debates on the ARMM will be carried over on Monday," Bagatsing said.

Bagatsing said the anti-RH congressmen had decided to hold the interpellation to allay fear that was expressed by Lagman, principal author of the bill.

Congress recess

Congress will go on recess on March 21 and return on May 9 for a two-month session only.

Lagman questioned why of the 55 anti-RH legislators who had listed to interpellate, not one was prepared to do so despite the readiness of the authors to answer questions in the plenary since March 6.

"There is a need for draft's advocates so that the reproductive health bill can be examined into detail enactment," Lagman stressed.

"There is a need for an immediate high-level conferences through plenary debates even as the RH advocates are certain that their measure will survive the furnace of interrogation," he said.

Lagman said the opponents' procrastination signaled a "victory" for the reproductive health measure because it validated the reality that the RH advocates had the opportunity to augment as well as enrich while the opposition were merely employing dilatory tactics.

"Delaying the passage of the RH bill is a defensive strategy," he said.

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DID YOU KNOW

According to figures from the Department of Health, "152 new cases of HIV were registered in the country in January this year, bringing the total (of reported) HIV cases to 5,147 since 1984. (Editor's Desktop, Inquirer Research)

Pasig local execs treated to Boracay trip

'Officials attended seminar on empowerment'

By Kristine Felisse Mangunay

THE PASIG City government yesterday confirmed that it shouldered all the expenses for a three-day seminar workshop for barangay officials on Boracay Island in Aklan last month.

In a phone interview yesterday, Andrew Santiago of the city's Public Information Office (PIO) said that the seminar-workshop was attended by 333 barangay officials from the city's 30 barangays.

He added that the training was a project of Pasig's Human Resource Development Office (HRDO) which had the approval of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Commission on Audit (COA).

The money for the workshop came from the city government's budget for seminars, training and other projects.

Santiago declined to say how much money was spent for the three-day workshop conducted at the upscale Boracay Regency Hotel.

However, he said that Mayor Robert Jaworski had already ordered the preparation of a report on the city government's expenses for the conduct of the seminar on "empowering barangay officials."

"It was a basic course on enhancing the proficiency of barangay officials toward an effective Pasig City," Santiago said.

The first of the two-phase seminar was held in Pasig City from July 7 to 9 while the second part was conducted from Feb. 24 to 26.

Santiago, meanwhile, denied reports that the barangay officials were billeted at Boracay Regency Hotel.

According to him, the seminar project was just held there although the participants stayed at Boracay Garden Resort.

This was confirmed by resource sources on the island.

The resort has a triple A rating (the highest rating for Philippine resorts), and is equipped with modern amenities, including two large swimming pools and a children's pool.

It offers a package inclusive of a three-day, two-night stay with daily complimentary breakfast, round-trip transfers and dinner meals, according

PHOTO AD

2,000 families lose homes in fire

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SOME 2,000 families lost their homes when a fire hit a densely populated area in Barangay Culiat, Quezon City, on Wednesday evening.

SFO3 Fortunato Aldo also reported that three persons were injured in the blaze that damaged an estimated P1.5 million worth of property.

According to Aldo, the fire started at 7:23 p.m. in a house on Adello Street near Visayas Avenue.

It reached Tiak Force Bonn and was placed under control in around 10 p.m. although specific fires were reported until midnight.

He added that the fire department received around 1,200 tickets made of light materials. It also damaged a school near the area, the Montessori School of Quezon City.

Three people were reported injured although only one of them was admitted to a receiving post in San Lorito. He suffered second degree burns in the face and body when he tried to go back to his house to save some of his family's belongings.

Aldo said firefighters had a hard time containing the blaze because the area was accessible only through narrow alleys. At times, the alleys were blocked by residents carrying their possessions, he added.

Arson investigator SFO1 Reynaldo Caballes said the fire broke out in a flammable gas house owned by Junjun Ursua on Adello Street.

According to him, the fire may have been caused by faulty electrical wiring.

Caballes said the power outages in the area were not helpful although the strike had been put into closure, something which may have caused friction and led to the fire.

A RESIDENT of Barangay Culiat throws a plastic container to douse the still smoldering embers of what remains of his home on Adello Street.

Cop in ransom probe claims MPD official took ₱12M

SENIOR Insp. Peter Hermes holds a copy of the complaint against him after he and three other police officers were charged at the Manila City Hall on Wednesday night.

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A POLICEMAN who said a Manila Police District (MPD) supervisor pocketed the lion's share of the P30 million ransom recovered from a group of kidnappers.

This was the claim made by one of the five policemen accused of stealing around P12 million—half of big, they claimed, ransom given by a Malaysian trader to his captors.

During separate proceedings on Wednesday night, Senior Insp. Peter Hermes and their other three accused filed counter affidavits in which they claimed that they received only a measly P500,000 each.

He claimed that when the officers returned the loot to them, a huge part of the ransom was already missing.

After the inquest, Hermes, along with four other members of the MPD Station 5—Police Officer 3 Ernesto Bonilla, Jeffrson Reynoso and Mike Ongpauco and PO1 Rommel Ocampo—were charged with qualified theft or misappropriation of public fund, obstruction of justice and violation of Republic Act 9160 or the anti-graft and corrupt practices act at the city prosecutor's office.

They were also accused of being accessories to the crime of kidnapping with the aggravating circumstances of public position and abuse of confidence.

Hermes and the four police officers were initially booked in police custody at Camp Bagong Diwa pending the filing of charges in court.

The charges filed before Assistant City Prosecutor Jude Bennett against the five policemen were based on the complaint lodged by MPD General Investigators Section head, Chief Insp. Marcelo Reyes, in behalf of the MPD.

In his complaint, Reyes said, "Without securing said property under proper supervision by the DMD Items of the Crime Operations, the assets were purportedly brought for custodial inspection to the Manila police station without declaring the recovered items in the said robbery/kidnap/extortion." Hence, subject police officers discreetly left the Western Mansion through the hotel backdoor without informing law office items of the recent robbery operation."

He added, "Investigation disclosed that the ransom money has also recovered in the said operation was . . . P30,000,000, contrary to reports submitted by [Western] and his men."

A sworn statement of Senior Insp. Elmer Vergara, Intramuros Police Community Precinct (PCP) commander, also claimed that Marcelo at first denied that he and his team were able to recover the money.

However, Vergara added that during questioning, one of the kidnappers who was arrested told him that the policemen took the money which was found inside their room at the Western Mansion.

Vergara said he immediately relayed the information to Director Leopoldo Bataoil, MPD Station 5 chief Supt. Felipe Cayon Jr.

He added that Hermes later admitted that they were able to recover P4.2 million from the kidnappers.

METROBRIEFS

No bail plea seen in taxidriver's death

POLICE ruled out bail plea in the death of taxicab driver Edgardo Ong Lopez, 35, who jumped to his death on the 11th floor of Tuazon Condominium on Aurora Avenue, Quezon City, early Wednesday morning.

"Based on our investigation, it's a case of suicide," said city police chief Senior Supt. Felipe Rosales Jr.

The victim left behind a handwritten note saying he was "tired of life" and "decided to end his misery."

Rosales said the victim's brother-in-law disclosed that Lopez had been depressed for the last year.

"Dahil nga depressed siya, hindi siya nagbibigay ng bail," he said.

Rosales added that Lopez's wife, Diana Jr., who had talked to the victim through phone, told police that Lopez was crying and said she could no longer bear his depression. Diana added that part of Lopez's notes indicated his desire for his condominium unit to go to PO3 Jason Cabral and they heard the victim's calling card with the name "JEPOY CABRAL." Cabral, who is the victim's son, reportedly was a friend of Lopez's daughter. He died in the hospital. Investigators are now looking into the victim's financial records to determine if he had any debts. —Tarra C. Quismorio

Pasig local execs treated to Boracay trip

From page A23

to Caticlan.

The cheapest package for a three-day, two-night stay in Boracay costs P4,500 per person.

The Inquirer learned about the out-of-town learning after a resident of Ordoñez, Maria Rancho Ginaya, sounds about seeing barangay officials from Brgy. Cogt in strong it it boiled to Boracay to attend a "seminar workshop."

"Even a barangay workshop have to be held in a low-star hotel in Boracay?" she said in reference to Discoville.

BAO officials, at first, refused to confirm the Boracay junket.

A check of the Brgy. Cogt government's website, however, showed a news release about the seminar titled "Brgy. Leaders Boracay."

There were also several photos of Ordoñez posing with the participants.

The Inquirer tracked down five of the participants, a barangay treasurer and secretary who said the seminar was scheduled by Pangasinan Quiroben, DILG chief of the provincial division, and a CDA representative.

The day of the seminar was devoted for manual planning while the remaining two days featured lectures and discussions. *With Yvonne D. Burgos, Inquirer Visayas*

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Bahrain arrests 6 dissident leaders after crackdown

MANAMA—Bahrain arrested at least six Sunnite opposition leaders on Thursday, a day after its authorities on protests by the Shi'ite Muslim majority drove out US combat jets and tanks from a weekend standoff.

Calm returned to the streets of the Gulf Arab island after Bahraini heavy-metal tanks and helicopters to drive protesters off the streets and clear a camp that had become a symbol of their demand for more rights and power on the Sunnite royal family.

Three police and three protesters died in the crackdown.

Among those detained overnight were Abq Jaafar Hassan, a lawmaker, and Abdu Wahhab Hussein, a leader of the Wefaq bloc of Shi'ite clerics and activists.

Wefaq said the detentions of the seven family members, the largest opposition party Wednesday said.

Many moderate Shi'ite had refused to demands to unseating political and economic Sunnite reform. Also arrested was Ibrahim Sharif, head of the secular leftist party Waad.

"Two of the thugs climbed over the fence to get in our yard, once we were out pointed a gun in Ibrahim's face and the other went to our garage to let every one else in," Fawzia Ismail, Sharif's wife, said over telephone.

"They were going around, smashing things in the house."

The arrests yesterday could not immediately be couched by consensus and the charges against those arrested were not known.

The unrest has brought us to fear of troops in Bahrain from Sunnite-ruled neighbours Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which fear the uprising that began last month could play into the hands of non-Arab Shi'ite power Iran.

It also has prompted sympathy protests from Shi'ites across the region, including in Israeli-ruled Gaza.

A VOLDER projects head of the Armor Personnel Carrier as his fellow soldier keeps watch over Bahrain Financial Harbor were tanks and helicopters were used to drive protesters from the streets on Wednesday. AP/File

Earlier this week, Washington said it understood why Bahrain's Sunnite rulers had called in reinforcements. But on Wednesday, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said force was not the answer.

"We find what's happened in Bahrain alarming. We think that there is an eminently success to the aspirations and demands of the demonstrators," she told CBS. "There are on the wrong track," a troubled course and dozens of people were taken to Bahrain International Hospital on Wednesday, hit by rubber bullets or shotgun pellets or suffering tongue inhalation—all weapons used by riot police. One was hit by a live bullet.

Protester Reem rocks and gored bombs at police who were clearing the protest camp and killed three by running them over with their car at high speed, witnesses and medical were carried.

US President Barack Obama called the King of Saudi Arabia, a strategic ally of Washington in the Middle East, and of Bahrain, home to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet and seen as a bulwark against Iranian influence, to urge "restraint" and "reform."

Political analysts say the Obama administration, which backed pro-democracy protests in Egypt, faced a new dilemma as violence in Bahrain appeared to drab hopes for political talks.

US Assistant Secretary of State Jeff Feltman went to Bahrain on Monday to push for talks to resolve the crisis. The US sees its parliament said on Wednesday he had obtained talk.

Bahrain's 90 percent of Bahrainis are Shi'ites. Most say they want only the same treatment as Sunnis and a constitutional monarchy led only by hereditary by the members of the monarchy have obtained Sunnis, who fear the unrest could spread.

Analysts say the intervention of Sunni-ruled Gulf Arab countries in Bahrain might provoke a response from Tehran, which supports Shi'ite groups in Iraq and Lebanon.

"This was a major and a dangerous decision because that is not has been internationalised now. There are potentials in Iraq in Iraq, in Lebanon," Walid Jumblatt Hussein said. Reuters

Taliban, Afghan gov't looking to start peace talks

KABUL, Afghanistan—As US troops pave the Taliban to their desert and mountain redoubts, Western diplomats, Taliban leaders and the Afghan government have begun to take a hard look at what it would take to start a negotiated settlement of the fighting.

Efforts to start peace talks have yielded little in the past. Several efforts, initiated in a political mask is growing as pressure mounts to find a politically acceptable way to reduce the violence that has left no public support for the war effort in the US and Europe.

"The environment is shifting," said a Western diplomat here, who refused a number of others interviewed for this article. "Before, it was a stalemate. Now, there are indications that, if we could move quite quickly."

Publicly, at least, the Taliban have always stated they will not negotiate before foreign troops leave the country. Now, however, some Taliban leaders have signaled they would be open to talks sooner if their security could be guaranteed, and additional UN fighters appear increasingly eager to see an end to the war.

For their part, US officials have also been adamant that they will not talk to top Taliban or other insurgent leaders they consider to be "irreconcilable," but recently they have quietly begun softening the obstacles to talks.

In February, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, in a speech at the state country in New York, appeared to create long-standing preconditions for talks, that the insurgents lay down their arms, accept the Afghan Constitution and sunder from al-Qaida. Instead, she described them as "necessary conditions."

Officially, the state department played down the change in language, but a senior Western diplomat in Washington, who was familiar with the strategy behind Clinton's speech, said: "It was not intended to explicitly make preconditions into outcomes. But the new tone leaves room for interpretation, which opens doors."

Emotional or not, the speech was read in Kabul as giving a green light to other Western countries to start laying the groundwork for talks.

The criteria shift here was Hillary Clinton's speech," said a senior Afghan analyst. "It is a message for other countries who want to try to facilitate a negotiation."

It is the Americans and that many have been waiting for, first, and countries, among them Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have tried to serve as peace brokers, but without the imprimatur of the US. That the Americans are signaling that they are open to talks "is a paradigm shift," said Fereydun Ghaffar Spanta, President Hamid Karzai's national security advisor.

The Afghan government insists the preconditions be met before it remains the same but supports diplomatic efforts that would lead to negotiations, and it appears willing to provide amnesty and security for the Taliban leaders as they are participate in talks underway.

The High Peace Council, which was appointed by Karzai, recently wrote letters to the Quetta Shura and the Peshawar Shura, two of the Taliban's leading organizations, inviting them to talks. A member of the council, Haji Deen Mohammad, said the Taliban shuras replied with questions about whether the council had true autonomy and could ensure the safety of insurgent leaders.

"We are working on this process to find a location or safe haven for the Taliban to go there with protections and guarantees to talk to the detentions and the world," said Arsala Rahmani, the former Taliban minister of high-reconciliation. *New York Times News Service*

US grades itself 'C' in facing cyber attack

WASHINGTON—The US military does not have the trained personnel or the legal authorities it needs to respond to a computer-based attack on America or its allies, and a crisis would quickly divide the nation, the Pentagon's cyber commander said on Wednesday.

Gen. Keith Alexander, head of the defense department's Cyber Command, told Congress that he would give the military a grade of "C" in its ability to protect Pentagon networks, but said things are much worse than they were a few years ago and confidence is improving.

"My concern is that we do not have the capacity to do every thing we need to accomplish. To put it bluntly, we are very thin, and a crisis would quickly stress our cyber forces," Alexander said. "We cannot afford to allow cyberspace to be a sanctuary where real and potential adversaries can marshal forces and capabilities to cate against us and our allies. This is not a hypothetical danger."

The US government has said its networks are probed and attacked millions of times a day, and that cyber criminals, terrorists and other nations are getting more sophisticated in developing ways to steal critical data or affect critical infrastructure such as the electrical grid.

Alexander's grim assessment of America's abilities is fend off cyber-based wars reduced realism in the day by homeland security officials and analysts.

"Whatever we are doing now is not working," said James Lewis, a cybersecurity expert and senior fellow at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

4 New York Times journalists missing in Libya

The New York Times said on Wednesday that four of its journalists reporting on the conflict in Libya were missing. Officials said they were lost to contact while the journalists, reporting from the eastern port city of Ajdabiya, Tuesday morning. Libyan government forces, local people accosted, said that they had been forced up by Libyan government forces, the newspaper said it could not confirm that information. "We have talked with officials of the Libyan government in Tripoli, and they believe they are working hard to contact the whereabouts of our journalists," said Bill Keller, executive editor of The Times. "We are grateful to the Libyan government for their assurance that if our journalists were captured they would be released promptly and unharmed." The missing journalists are Anthony Shadid, the Beirut bureau chief and a two-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize for foreign reporting; Stephen Farrell, a reporter and videographer who was last released by the Taliban in 2009 and covered by British commandos; and two photographers, Tyler Hicks and Lynsey Addario, who have worked extensively in the Middle East and Africa. *New York Times News Service*

New Iran weapons materials seized in S. Korea, Singapore

UNITED NATIONS—South Korea and Singapore have intercepted suspect nuclear and weapons materials bound for Iran that breach UN sanctions imposed on the Islamic republic, diplomats said on Thursday. The Iran seizures, made in the past six months but only revealed now, add to a growing list of alleged violations attempts by Iran to get international nuclear and arms goods, which are bringing mounting pressure to Tehran sanctions, they said. "South Korea authorities found more than 400 suspicious items in just one go at Seoul airport in December," one diplomat said, giving details from a report to the UN Iran sanctions committee. The Iran-related items used for nuclear facilities, the diplomat said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the sanctions have not been made public. AP

Washington Post admits plagiarism by reporter

THE WASHINGTON Post published an editor's note on its website on Wednesday apologizing for two articles by a longtime Post reporter who used unattributed text from the Associated Press, crediting that newspaper only high as a source. The note said the articles "contained substantial material that was borrowed and duplicated, without attribution, from The Arizona Republic, associated press." The articles were written by Dan Harsky, an investigative reporter who has been at the Republic almost 30 years and won two Pulitzer Prizes. *New York Times News Service*

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Editor Lawrence B. Casco

The WORLD

US shifts policy on Libya as Benghazi siege looms

From no-fly zone to aerial bombing of tanks

WASHINGTON—The prospect of a deadly siege of the rebel stronghold in Benghazi, Libya, has produced a striking shift in tone from the Obama administration, which is now pushing for the United Nations to authorize aerial bombing of Libyan tanks and heavy artillery to try to halt the advance of forces loyal to Moammar Gadhafi.

The administration, which remains deeply reluctant to be drawn into an armed conflict in yet another Muslim country, is nevertheless backing a resolution in the Security Council that would give countries a broad range of options for aiding the Libyan rebels, including military steps that go well beyond a no-fly zone.

Administration officials—who have been debating a no-fly zone for weeks—concluded that such a step now would be "too little, too late" for rebels who have been pushed back to Benghazi after capturing many significant territories, which some military analysts have called a decisive win, to prevent Gadhafi from moving tanks and artillery into Benghazi.

The United States is insisting that any military action needs to be carried out by an international coalition, including Libya's Arab neighbors.

The rapid advance of forces loyal to Gadhafi, combined with rising calls from the Arab world to prevent a rout of the opposition, has changed the calculations of the administration, which had clung to a belief that countering in a Middle East uprising could provoke severe anti-US backlash.

"The turning point was really the Arab League statement on Saturday," Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said on Wednesday in remarks traveling with her in Cairo. "That was an extraordinary statement in which the Arab League asked for Security Council action against one of its own members."

Clinton said she was hopeful the Security Council would vote no later than Thursday. The US ambassador to the UN, Susan E. Rice, is in intense negotiations over the language of a resolution, sponsored by Lebanon, another Arab state, and backed by France and Britain, countries in the region, notably Egypt of Saudi Arabia. Some administration officials voiced the hope that the threat of military action could prompt Gadhafi to show some restraint.

Still, interviews with administration officials suggest that events on the ground were leaving its hand.

"The regime's military gains have gotten everyone's attention," said a senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

President Barack Obama is under pressure from both foreign leaders and allies in Congress to take decisive action. The French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, sent a letter to the US and other members of the Security Council, urging them to vote for the Lebanese resolution and declaring a no-fly zone, saying that the world had only days, or even hours, to head off a Gadhafi victory.

On Wednesday, one of Gadhafi's sons, Seif al-Islam, urged the rebels to leave the country, saying, "Within 48 hours everything will be finished. Our forces are almost in Benghazi."

Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass., chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, said he regretted that the debate over US response to Libya had dragged on so long, allowing Gadhafi to regain his footing.

"I don't like that we've lost this time," Kerry said. "It's compacted the choices, diminished the options, but it's changed the state of play somewhat."

Administration officials contend that a no-fly zone alone would not be effective, in part because they say it could not be set up before April. Among the other measures being proposed by the US: sending foreign soldiers to Libya to advise the rebels, or financing them with some of the $33 billion belonging to the Gadhafi regime, which many Western by the treasury department. Rebels could use the money to buy weapons, officials said.

Those steps, however, would not come in time to stave off an assault by Gadhafi's forces on Benghazi.

"What everybody is focused on is deterring a line, literally in the sand, around Benghazi, to prevent Gadhafi's forces from capturing the city and staging a bloodbath," said Tom Malinowski, the Washington director of Human Rights Watch. "If Gadhafi succeeds in doing that, the momentum in the entire Middle East."

But more aggressive military options might make it difficult for a coalition to satisfy Russia and China, two veto-wielding members of the Security Council, which have both opposed such measures in the past. Germany, India and other council members have also expressed skepticism about a no-fly zone. New York Times News Service

WHAT'S INSIDE
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Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

SPORTS

■ **Thunder** melt Heat; Celts up /A32

PEACE! Lauster of Smart Gilas (right) tries to put up a shot off Air21's Alpha Bangura in a recent game at the Cuneta Astrodome won by the Mahindra, 101-99.

Gilas 5 takes on E-Painters

Giant-killers seek playoff spot

By Jane Navarro

SPENT KNOCKING out three heavyweights, Smart Gilas shoots for the first playoff slot in the PBA Commissioner's Cup today when it takes on Rain Or Shine at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The unbeaten national team tangle at 5 p.m. with the Elasto Painters, who are running hosts at 3-1 in their campaign start in the league.

Teams need at least five victories in the nine-game eliminations to qualify to the six-squad playoffs, according to PBA chief statistician Fil delaVega-cruz.

"Our goal is to be in the playoffs, and we're now in a good position to accomplish that early," said Smart Gilas coach Rajko Toroman after the Serbians claimed the scalps of Alaska, Air21 and Barangay Ginebra in consecutive bids. "I'm first, thanks, San Miguel Beer and struggling NLEX.

B-Meg Derby Ace and veteran Mendoza are expected to jointly bolster for another import in a bid to reinforce their 2-3 card.

B-Meg coach Ariza Gallent is said to be seeking the services of Andre Emmett—a seasoned NBA campaigner and all-time leading scorer of the US NCAA Texas Tech under renowned collegiate coach Bobby Knight.—GLAZ, INQ

PHAREX's Jason Deutchman lays it up off a Black Water defender.

C. Lhuillier, Pharex cagers clobber foes

By Jasmine W. Payo

CERVANA GUELLER dominated Café Nonce in the second half and pulled off an 83-62 triumph yesterday in the 2011 PBA D-League Foundation Cup at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Green Lancers entered main threat Jervi Fernandez, who was ejected on a flagrant foul in the third quarter, as Allein Maliksi, Marvin Hayes and James Sena fueled a third-quarter onslaught that gave them a 61-42 spread.

"If you're facing a team like Café Nonce that has all college players, the pressure is on you to get a big lead right away," Cervana coach Luigi Trillo said of the squad built around Green Archer University standouts.

"In the second half we were able to adjust," added Trillo, who also acknowledged the strong play of Café Nonce in the first half.

In the opener, Pharex fishing Generals rolled back Blackwater Elite, 100-90, with Marlon Arbilo, Raymond Aguilar and Jason Deutchman stepping up in the second half.

Maliksi topped with 16 points for the Genz, who also threw double-double games from Hayes (22 points and 12 rebounds) and Sena (11 and 10).

Fernandez, who shone with the Philippine Patriots in the recent Asean Basketball League, was thrown out after his flagrant foul on Arl Jeff Garcia at 8:33 in the third period.

Blackwater, also banking on college-game stars from the Arellano Chiefs, roared to a 12-8 start in the first five minutes, before Pharex settled down.

Arbilo, Deutchman and Aguilar combined for 26 points at the start of the second half to help lift the Genzels to their first double-digit lead, 60-50.

Deutchman, a 6-foot-3 fill-ins from San Diego State-Yuma CC, debuted with a double-double of 16 points and 10 boards.

GAMES TODAY
(FilOil Flying V Arena)
1 p.m. – Café Nonce vs. Pharex
3:15 p.m. – Blackwater vs. Cebuana Lhuillier

Azkals switch to attack mode

By Cedell P. Tupas

NATIONAL FOOTBALL coach Rene Michael Pesino will be bringing a more attack-minded side to the AFC Challenge Cup group qualifying stage in Sarajaero, Myanmar starting Monday.

With the impending absence of star striker Phil Younghusband, Weiss added offensive depth by including strikers Angel Aldeguer, William Epinosa, Patrick Hustilano and Yamsik Suson and midfielder Ricardo Borio in the lineup.

Dropped from the squad were defenders Isobel Borromeo, Dennerk Palmos, Jerry Barbosa and Kim Belmonte and midfielder Peter Jaugan, who were informed of the decision by the German coach Wednesday night.

"I think this gives us the quality we need to move to the next level," Pesino told the reporters upon the team's arrival in Manila yesterday morning.

"Our new players give us better options."

The Azkals, who resume training today at the University of Makati pitch before leaving for Europe on Saturday, suffered a blow with Younghusband forced to sit out the group stage because of a partial hamstring tear.

A source in the team said Younghusband would need at least three weeks to recover from injury.

"We made the changes we needed to do," said team manager Dan Palami. "The experience in Mongolia only made the team stronger."

Goalkeeper Neil Etheridge will return to the squad together with defender Rob Gier in a development welcomed by Weiss, but defensive midfielder Jason de Jong will again miss the group qualifying because of his commitment with his Indonesian club.

The Philippine Football Federation has given a $5000 bonus to members of the squad for advancing to the group stage.

PFF president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta, who made the announcement at the Beijing Airport Wednesday night, said the Azkals are expected a bigger incentive if they advance to the main tournament next year.

Meanwhile, Araneta, along with Smart Communications officials Orlando Vea and Patrick Gregorio yesterday signed the Memorandum of Agreement sealing the $500 million sponsorship deal for the PFF for the next 10 years.

STRIKER Phil Younghusband (center) tries to control a pass against two Mongolian defenders in Tuesday's match.

Eagles, Lions head FilOil Preseason Cup entries

By Cedell P. Tupas

ATENEO and San Beda, reigning champions in their respective school turf, headline the 17-team field seeking entries in the 2011 FilOil Flying V Preseason Cup opening April 9 at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Blue Eagles, who are seeking a fourth straight title in the UAAP and the NCAA title in between, Lions will test their strength against last midable squads like the Ateneo University, University of Santo Tomas, National U, Letran, Mapua, JRU and defending champion San Sebastian.

Providing an interesting subplot to the tournament will be the unveiling of top rookies like Kiefer Ravena of Ateneo, Bimel Amor of San Beda, Jeric Teng and Kevin Ferrer of UST and Bobby Ray Parks of National U.

The season tournament will have a guest team in the Lyceum Pirates.

The pocket tournament, meanwhile, will have two teams competing in the 15-under and 13-under BP Youth squads, and a shootout-ing contest with a championship of its own.

The tournament will also test the coaching prowess of new bench tactician Jerry Codiñera, who will call the shots for UE.

San Sebastian also underwent a coaching shakeup, dropping old tutelar Arturo "Boy" Valenzona.

Other teams with new coaches are National U with Eric Altamirano and University of the Philippines with Bobby Bandola.

Ben Mbanu returns for another tour of duty for the FEU Tamaraws.

The pocket tournament activity marks the start of the activities leading to the opening next month.

Gilas five takes on Elasto Painters today

Please go page B/P9

to play inspired ball after auspiciously gaining Filipino citizenship, his application for naturalization, approved by both houses of Congress, passed into law last week.

At 6-foot-10 the tallest on the field, Beard is a true eligible to join the team in the Phil. Asia Championships in Wuhan, China, on Sept. 15 to 25, where the country seeks to clinch the continental berth for the 2012 London Olympics.

"Many seriously doubt that we can advance in the playoffs," said Smart Gilas manager Frankie Lim. "But in every game, we are proving them wrong."

The Elasto Painters, however, have been transformed by coach Yeng Guiao into a fighting crew anchored on former PBA veteran Dennis Adams, who is considered to be opposing in the points of essential product such as rice and bread to assist but two, anticipate against drawing public support for a basketball team.

Quarterfinal are being eyed on a shaky basis on the various social networking sites about the rationale for the gasoline price increases announced against the reality of inventories purchased at lower prices but being sold based on a current market prices.

Gasoline and other oil products are convinces that the public cannot do without and, therefore, there is no need to promote it except in a competitive mode. But whether it will work is doubtful.

Filipinos Shell, some years ago, decided to lower the PBA on winter when the public can be grinding to gasoline or kerosene for cooking purposes, a method taken while at the same time burdening the customers with higher prices.

RECOGNITION Ariston Pujol, chair of the Manila Sports Confederation of the Philippines (hands down left), presents a token signed by Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose Cojuangco Jr., recognizing the BSCP as the national sports association for billiards and pool to Te Yung-ca, president of the Asian Pocket Billiard Union during the union's March 11 general assembly in Taoyuan, Taiwan. With them are (from left) Yoon Lee of the Korea Billiards Federation, Albert Matanguil, BSCP secretary general, Bonnie Chua, Singapore's APBU representative.

Big risk—why the name change?

INSIDE SPORTS
Ronnie Nathanielsz

NEALE PAZ recognize the takeover right of San Miguel Corp. to change the name of its San Miguel Beer team to the Philippine Basketball Association to Petron, we are certainly baffled over the name change.

To continue accuse the canine who love the sport of basketball with a genius, San Miguel drew ants...and still always remain...it seems they were always with through the years as the flagship representative of San Miguel Corp.

It was inherently Petron and coincided the San Miguel Beer name with unavailable distinction. To change the name to Petron and to expect the same dividend following it is tremendous risk that the corporation is taking.

Simply put, there is absolutely no synergy between beer and gasoline.

The fundamental reason why names join the PBA is to help promote its product in the competitive marketplace and to keep its brand name in the public consciousness.

Not only by winning but we don't believe that Petron, an oil industry in the Philippines, can push its product in the marketplace in the fashion that San Miguel Beer did against its competitors.

* * *

Besides, the timing could not have been worse.

The constant increases in gasoline prices, which has burdened the Filipino consumer and resulted in an upswing in the prices of

That reality is far more pronounced today than it was when Shell decided to do the same. Its thing and pull out of the PBA.

Not seeing whether the decision to change the San Miguel Beer name to Petron, which is largely owned by the San Miguel Corp., was precipitated by the planned entry of Ramon Ang, a very small player in the market, into the oil industry in partnership with Saudi Aramco in Sinclair.

* * *

Surely Petron cannot consider Petron a competitor in the accepted sense of the word because it is basically a small player in the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

What is even more perplexing is the effort to bring our Phoenix when the Beta, to its credit, has invested in the PBA by sponsoring the one of the most popular basketball league in the greatest in the province.

We believe that with San Miguel Corp.'s right to continue its name, it should exhibit the same commitment to the sport, if not more, as it has in the past 37 years.

The Petrons have a storied history and have made a lot of contributions especially in the sport of unmatched quality. We will grieve to see it removed from our cherished PBA memories.

Cash prizes, ranking points at stake in badminton tilt

BEKING BADMINTON stars get a chance to vie for big prizes and ranking points against the country's leading players when the Philippine Badminton Training System tournament kicks off its inaugural season on March 27 at Bonifacio Stadium in Makati.

A prize pot of P75,000 will be up for grabs in the centerpiece open division with the winners in the men's and ladies' singles getting P30,000 each and the doubles and the mixed doubles champions receiving P15,000 each.

The runners-up will receive P15,000 while the semifinalists and quarterfinalists will pocket P10,500 and P5,500, respectively.

The Under-19 category offers a total purse of P30,000 while the Under-15 class stakes P9,000 in the four-leg nationwide circuit held to level the players according to their strength.

Registration cards at 6 p.m. today at the Bulelit office at 26 E. Mascling corner D Generis streets in San Juan. For inquiries, call 725-2408 or telefax 727-4942.

Southern Series drag racing tomorrow at BRC

A BIG FIELD is expected to race tomorrow in the second leg of the 2011 Sidewall Drag Racing Championship Southern Series at the Batangas Raceway Circuit Drag Strip in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The title defense remain wide open as no one won more eight time champion Jessel Bar Tan dominated the season.

John Michael Hernandez is eyeing back-to-back wins against the favorites following his first career win in the Sidewall Southern Series kickoff at the BRC Drag Strip last month.

Alvin Sacayo of 4D Motorsports, however, contended Hernandez from scoring a victory double by taking the Expert class over a double breakout.

BASEBALL MVPS The country's delegates to the 3 1st World Children's Baseball Fair in Jeju in Gyeonsang, Taiwan, join Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama and Philippine Amateur Baseball Association president Peter C. Huneeus during the recent Embassy Baseball Clinic in Cebu City. The young leaders' trip to Cebu's sister city also has the backing of Vice Mayor Joy Young and Consul Enrique of the Philippine Jaycee Senate.

SPORTSWATCH

Hillside derby fires off at Pasay Cockpit today

TOP SABONG-ERIC Sobredero from Pagsanjan, Batinis, Laguna's Pangalusian, Bicol, Pampanga and Zambales have their eyes on competitors in the Hillside Cock Derby starting at 4 p.m. today at the Pasay City Cockpit.

All the same venue last Friday, Jr. Sardo's entry "Tau Zimabuan" and Erwin Bayawa-Navarro's bet "Erwin Zamarbanan" topped the 67-fight 5th Hillside Big Bang Speed Cock Derby.

Derby host for today's derby hosted by the Hillside group of Al Balaoro and Antonio Lo Fo Wong, said all managed Lim Jose Rizal and Anthony Cleto.

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BY TOP CHOICE
At Santa Ana Park

Golden Boy, Top Rank duel for Donaire

By Rey Lucero

THE TUG-OF-WAR for Senador Donaire Jr. is on between Golden Boy Promotions and Top Rank Inc.

Oscar De La Hoya's GBP announced Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) that Donaire, the world bantamweight champion known as the Filipino Flash, has joined the stable of boxers by signing an exclusive multi-year contract after hosting Bol-Ayala's Top Rank.

But Donaire's lawyer Jesse Reaton against all those are vital to the transaction—a move to announce at what he also tried to ensure its values pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao also joined Top Rank to join GBP in 2007.

"Top Rank has a valid contract (with Donaire) and our plan is to enforce our rights," Arum told Ring Post over the weekend.

Donaire, the World Boxing Council and World Boxing Organization 124-pound titlist, and De La Hoya both doubt the three-year contract with Arum is no longer binding, even though it will not end until June 26.

According to Donaire's representatives, Arum failed to meet a condition in the contract, one that says the 30-Arum needs to fight three times a year. Records show that Donaire has fought only seven times since 2008.

Arum, however, told viaamma.com that "in the first year Donaire was suspended twice physically so that twice killed the contract."

The 70-year-old boxing Wall of Fame also cited a clause that says the promoter has "sole discretion" to re-"[Cancel]-contract."

Richard Schaefer, CEO of Golden Boy Promotions, said Yahoo!Sports that company lawyers believe that Donaire is free to negotiate a contract at this point.

Schaefer added that Cameron Dunkin, Donaire's manager, is expected to be present on behalf of the Filipino-American, whose stock soared after his phenomenal second-round knockout of former champion Fernando Montiel in Mexico last month.

"I'm honored to be passing to many great fighters and champions on the Golden Boy Promotions roster," Donaire told AFP. "I'm going to fight my best and win more titles for this team and will give the fans the fight they want to see."

Oscar De La Hoya also issued fans in his stable.

"Nonito Donaire is one of the top boxers in the world today," De La Hoya told AFP. "We're going to make sure he gets the chance to defend his world titles and show us how great he is."

Arum had earlier offered Donaire $500,000 for his next fight, but apparently GBP dangled moves more irresistible offer.

HIGHTED Donaire Jr. says he's "honored to be joining so many great fighters and champions on the Golden Boy Promotions roster." AFP/GETTY

Patrombon slips past US bet in Kuching tilt

TOP SEED Aiza Patrombon survived a shaky first set to stun American Bernett Eggo, 7-9 (9-9), 9-2, Wednesday and reach the boys' singles third round of the 17th Suzuwok Chief Minister's Cup at Kuching, Malaysia.

Patrombon, who had a bye in the first round, will next take on Alek Bargnies of Australia, who packed off a 6-0, 9-2 upset over Indonesian Ivo Edmanuel Gilden.

In boys' doubles, Patrombon and Jadon Grainer of New Zealand received a bye to the second round as the fourth-seeded pair.

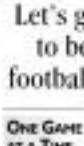
They will get going against Thailand's Nuttawee Rakchaisan and Guntanee's Chaiwat Kaewkhiew in the quarterfinals. Patrombon and Jun-Chi share of Chinese Taipei, 7-6 (7-3), 6-4.

Patrombon is hoping to clinch his first title this year after getting frustrated in the final of the Thailand leg last week, where he was also the top pick.

Eggo broke Patrombon first at 5-4 lead in the opener but was the Filipino, evaded his 10 in the world, broke back at love to level the match.

In the tiebreak, Patrombon quickly surged to a 4-1 lead but Eggo showed back to take the upperhand at 7-4. The two fought back to 9-9 deadlock. Patrombon forged ahead at 7-6 before wrapping up the set with a volley winner. *Mary Ann Iburan-Reyes*

Let's get used to being a football nation



ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sir Sammy

THE PHILIPPINE home team is heading to one more round of the AFC Challenge Cup after winning over Hong Kong in two games, the Azkals' 3-1 and 1-0 all win in Bacolod was enough to outscore the 2-1 loss on the Mongolians' home.

Because football is so outstanding and engaging and goals come so rarely so does traffic on Edsa—kindle a sports analogy but you get what I mean—we should see more Filipinos supporting the team.

And more so when the Philippine team plays well, we are involved. Perhaps more so now since that management of the palace just put where the Azkals reminded us that we can play football.

But suffering football lovers together will serve for part of our sporting aspirations. Our football engine lasts about ten are just beginning to rev up the game and so much more has to be done to improve players' performance.

Mongolia and one of the elite teams in the region but we will have more signs down the road as we try to improve, we will invest financial, manpower and infrastructure support but more will be needed than keeping those for less.

The opportunities that coaches have at least. If we were trying to with a little more exposure other than just recently also Azkals, as to will survive competitive league to play.

Let's simply enjoy this football moment since. Honestly, we are just beginning to understand the nuances of the game. Those who are already knowledgeable should be willing to explain the rules and those aspects.

We know you're not really understand how hard it is to score in football. Our basketball mind is still down where are teams scored, so one have to develop to new set of eyes to appreciate "the beautiful game" that the world loves so zealously.

We will need to develop our homegrown players to create a bigger pool of talent. We cannot blame many of the restaurant-based players who have come with their contracts to professional teams because they do want to build their families well.

Because of the abundance of worldwide football talent, getting a call to be in the training team of an established journeyman team this early is a chance one does not have.

What we want to see is the strong and talented squad of local foreign-assisted and foreign-born players who can step up to battle Philippine football team whenever it is needed to compete.

So let's all get in front of the water where the Azkals play for contest and the new of the teams in their future friendly matches and qualifying games. Let's go and's showing each message at the goal and games with every possible way.

Let's start joining and so watching and supporting our football team play for all of us.

38 NSAs assured of ₱275-M PSC windfall

By Mari Anthony Rayos

GARCIA

UTEH All-silicon high budget, the Philippines should finish in the top three in the Indonesia Southeast Asian Games in November.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Ritter Garcia predicted this reminder after the agency allocated a total budget of P275.06 million for the 38 national sports associations, most of which will use them for training and preparation for the SEA Games.

"Right now, we are hitting over P350 million [in expenditures] which is about 91 million per gold in the SEA Games," said Garcia, referring to the 57th total gold medals dished in the 30 events in which the country has medals.

Though he does not expect an unprecedented number of golds, Garcia said that "with this kind of budget, we expect that they will perform better."

The country placed 10th in the 2009 Laos SEA Games with 30 gold, 35 silver and 61 bronze medals.

Of the NSAs, taekwondo, wushu and shooting emerged with the biggest budget of P31 million each, followed by bowling and field with P31.05 million, boxing P30 million, swimming P22.1 million, gymnastics P13.8 million and football P10.05 million.

Garcia said the budgets of 10 more NSAs, including basketball, football, bowling and chess, have not been approved by the PSC board of trustees. The 10 percent of budgets for recognized associations, which have ongoing leadership issues, is also pending.

The PSC, Garcia said, has set aside P100 million for these 10 sports.

Aside from other considerations, the allocating also received P8.24 million, open-water swimming P600,000, triathlon's second-running P2.4 million and some pocket P6.9 million.

Budget managed to snag P500,000 from the budget pie, the lowest among the NSAs. For swimming got P2.44 million, sailing P9.6 million, judo P4.2 million, wrestling P6.1 million, triathlon P1.8 million and weightlifting P6.9 million.

Garcia stressed both the country and the budget gave priority to the local and not victims of the athletes, as requested by the Philippine Olympic Committee.

A total of 467 gold medals is at stake as 46 events in the SEA Games to be held in Palembang, Sumatera, and in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.

Dulay stays 3 ahead despite 74

CHIPE DULAY retained his three-shot lead over Paul Shin as Angeles could sing a three-par 74 in the second round of the National Golf Association of the Philippines' Mizuno Regional Amateur championship yesterday at Mimosa in Bacolod.

Dulay, who shot a 68 on Tuesday, stayed in front with a 142 aggregate as no 54-hole golfer is a 74 for 146 in the event presented by Mizuno Shoes.

Shin, who fired a 69 in the first round, followed Dulay in second place with 145 after a 73.

Angeles, who had a 71 in the first round, is in third place with 146 after a 75.

Jr. Tarpines, who finished second to Frankie Aurain in the Philippine Amateurs also at the Mimosa's three years ago, rounded out second straight 76 to tie former junior amateur champ Limpag at 149 in the second day leaders.

Parel-Rosehill clinches WVL Developmental crown

TWICE-TO-BE-BLESSED Jr. Silver Vikes title Player Jacinto Anne Linky Jacquenette Ester high in Mabini 25-Mar College-Mintit, 25-24, 25-11, and to the 17-Bridle Elementary Division championship of the Bird Cluster volleyball tilt Wednesday's Bridle hall League recently at the UP Baguio gymnasium gym.

La Salle-Dalupa Antipolo, meanwhile, gathered their place in beating the family School 25-18, 25-16, at the Association Gymnasium in Taytay.

Dalupa San Agustin also finished its MEP hosted debut Player in claiming the 17-Bridle Elementary title in the 25-17, 17-25, 25-12 victory.

Player Christian finished third by coming UP Integrated School 25-12, 25-11.

MEFP run to benefit calamity victims

THE MARIKINA Economic Foundation of the Philippines (MEFP) will hold its first running event on Saturday, March 26, at the Riverbanks in Marikina City.

Open to MEFP members and their families and friends, the event's proceeds will be used to set up a Disaster Relief Fund that will aid MEFP communities in the event of calamities like the flash floods brought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" in 2009.

The P200 entry fee entitles participants to a race shirt.

"With everything that is going on in the world today, we would like to be ready to help communities immediately after a disaster affects them," said MEFP heads Robert and Tanny Angeles.

There will be a 10 race for children 10 years old and younger and 2.5K and 5K for the older runners.

Assembly time for the 10 is 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. for 2.5K and 5K, set off, respectively.

Registration is ongoing at the MEFP office at the CEFIM building, Alvarez de Ubisalis University. For inquiries, call 426-4206.

Supporting the event are San Miguel Corp., Discount Source, LBG Gas Marketers, Metro Island Clinic (LBGMC) and Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital.

ROBERT and Fiorita Arcangelo. Business the discount for conversation.

SPORTSWATCH

Top fighters in URCC-Colt 45 tilt

THE ISCO season in mixed martial arts, headlined by the longest-reigning champion from the cauldron of Lucky Global, will see action in the Colt 45-Universal Health Corporation Championship 8:00 on April 12 at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City.

Vice "Predator" Dongcogan, holder of the pro-wrestling crown since 2008, lose its season 9 to no-contender, son of late Ten Bahadur's Mike "Tatanka" Bartolo, in their clash in the featured match of the event presented by Colt 45.

Also set to fight in the Philippines is Ben Rosenthal, who will make his debut in the featured match of the event presented by Colt 45.

Rosenthal is the champion in the Bellator 2008 bantamweight tournament and is the former MMA fighters.

"I love fighting about revenge and pride, so we expect another bone-crushing action," he said.

Another 10 fights are scheduled for the event on separate bouts. Bellator 2008, holder of Mixed Martial Arts Apostle regarding at 10 rounds, has scored combats starting at 7 a.m. to go down the ring.

Also set to make a statement is another Lakay MMA product Ronnie "Ronnie" Mendoza, who will Gracie's 42 kilograms combatant Angelito "Lito" Dilangalen in lightweight bouts. For more information, log on to www.universe.com.

Fraysa rules Pace chess 2nd leg

GM JETLI A. NOLIDO (2,512) continued his solo lead at 3-0 out of five games the first match to face the second leg of the 2011 Pace-BDA-RCBC age group chess championships last weekend at SM Megamall in Mandaluyong.

Nolido defeated Filipino Japanese at FEU-Para College, defeated four of his five opponents and drew with Dragonman Jhonny Angel Hizon Angeles.

The other winners were 11 year-old Christian Gabriel Chua with 4 points and 12 year-old Daniel Jude Lopez with 3 points while 11 year-old Archer Luis Ley is the 8 under level.

The IM Nolido sponsored tournament was supported by the two Pilipino Bourse Inc.

The tournament will continue to its 3rd leg on March 26 to 28. The champions will then represent the country in the 2011 Singapore Youth Festival on Dec. 20 to 31.

HERRERA

Herrera, Maquilan spearhead 10-Miler cast

KING HERRERA and Marcel Maquilan are expected to threaten for the course when they lead participants to the Takali 10-Miler on March 27 starting at the Cultural Center of the Philippines grounds in Pasay City.

Herrera topped the men's race last year in 53 minutes and 21 seconds, while Maquilan was the ladies' event in 1:05:34.

The 14-Miler champions will receive P7,500, the second place is P5,000 and the third places P2500. In the 5K and 3K distances, the top three finishers will receive medals and Takali gift packs. The group with the biggest delegation will also receive a trophy and a gift pack.

The race starts on Vicente Sotto Street inside the CCP complex. It will use the southbound side of Roxas Boulevard up to Mile Street and the west lane of Gil Puyat Avenue from Roxas Boulevard up to Filamco Street as follows:

Registration is ongoing at the McKinley Park Pavilion in North Greenhills in San Juan and Mizuno outlets at Trinoma Mall, SM Megamall and Bonifacio High Street in Taguig from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Log day for registration is on March 26. *Rommel S. Asuncion*

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SPORTS

Thunder melt Heat; Celts up

MIAMI—Kevin Durant scored 29 points and Russell Westbrook added 18 as the Oklahoma City Thunder frustrated Miami's offense all night en the way to a 96-83 win over the Heat on Wednesday.

James Harden scored 12 points for the Thunder, who have won five straight games.

Chris Bosh had 21 points and 11 rebounds, Dwyane Wade scored 21 points and LeBron James finished with 19 for the Heat, who had won three straight and were averaging 114 points in their last two games.

It was the first time Durant beat a James led team in seven career meetings.

At Boston, Jeff Green scored 13 of his 19 points in the second quarter as Boston control past Indiana, 92-80, and moved back into a first place tie in the Eastern Conference.

The victory left the Celtics and Chicago Bulls (48-18) with the same record in the race for homecourt advantage through the conference finals. Boston had lost three of four to fall out of the top spot.

Josh Richardson had 14 points and 11 rebounds for Indiana.

DURANT

Tyler Hansbrough, who had back-to-back career highs in a pair of victories against the New York Knicks this week, was 4 for 14, scoring 10 and grabbing 11 rebounds.

AP, Milwaukee, Dwight Howard had 31 points and 22 rebounds to lead Orlando to an overtime victory over Milwaukee, 93-89, that wrapped up a winning five-game road trip.

AP

INDIANA 92: Hansbrough 4-14, Hibbert 6-17, Granger 5-12, Collison 3-7, Green 7-15, Richardson 3-7, Watson 2-6, Price 1-3, Ford 0-0, Mahinmi 0-0, Augustin 0-0, Barbosa 0-0, Tolliver 0-0, Posey 0-0, Jones III 0-0, Dunleavy 0-0. Totals 31-81 10-13 80.

BOSTON 92: Pierce 5-11, Garnett 5-11, Bass 1-3, Rondo 4-10, Allen 3-8, Terry 2-5, Green 7-13, Wilcox 0-0, Pruitt 0-0, Bogans 0-0, Davis 0-0, Lucas III 0-0, Jeffries 0-0. Totals 27-61 10-13 92.

Djokovic remains unbeaten

INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA—Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer reached the quarterfinals at Indian Wells on Wednesday without dropping a set while eighth-seeded Andy Roddick bowed out.

Djokovic extended his perfect record this season to 18-0 by pounding Arlliss Gerbin Tiacki, 6-0, 6-1, and Spanish world number one Nadal had to work a little harder before easing off plucky Italian qualifier Stanislas Giovannini, 7-5, 6-4.

Second-ranked Federer, seeking a record fourth title at Indian Wells, survived 30-year-old American Ryan Harrison, 7-6, 6-3.

However, big serving American Roddick was eliminated, 6-3, 7-6, by Frenchman Richard Gasquet who clinched a gripping second set tiebreak 7-5 after his opponent had earlier been warned for racket abuse.

Marion Bartoli defeated former world number one Ana Ivanovic, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), to become the first woman to reach the semifinals.

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AWESOME PROJECTION
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Ayala ventures into power

IN THIS ISSUE

■ Remittances, 'hot money' up /B5
■ ADB ready to increase support to Asian nations /B8

Conglomerate acquires 50% of Ilocos wind farm

By Dave C. Dumlao

CONGLOMERATE AYALA Corp. now has a firm foothold in the power generation sector, as it expects to produce 1,000 megawatts (g capacity over the next five years.

Already, Ayala has acquired a substantial stake in a company that owns and operates the 33-MW wind farm in Bangui, Ilocos Norte.

Earlier, the Ayala group had teamed up with Japan's Mitsubishi Corp. to develop solar power facilities in the Philippines.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Ayala said it had purchased, through wholly owned subsidiary Hijos Corp., a 50-percent stake in NorthWind Power Development Corp., owner and operator of the Bangui wind farm—the first of its kind in Southeast Asia.

The conglomerate, which has interests in banking, property, telecommunications and water

►PAGE B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
March 17, 2011
43.920

STOCK MARKET
March 17, 2011
▼ 61.06

Stocks take a beating

LOOK. STOCKS yesterday took their worst beating on the earthquake in Japan, which triggered a massive tsunami and pushed the country on the brink of a nuclear disaster, spooked investors across the

STOCKS B4

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BUSINESS Friday
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Website: www.inquirer.net/business

PSE encourages more SMEs to go public

By Paolo G. Montecillo

BUSINESSES are like babies. They need looking after from their hardworking parents, the entrepreneurs.

These entrepreneurs have to care for their "babies" when they aren't doing well and step their praises when they reach new heights.

And eventually, entrepreneurs will have to let their firms leave the nest and have prosperous lives of their own.

For parents, this usually means sending their sons and daughters to college. For entrepreneurs, this can mean an initial public offering (IPO).

Jose Antonio Villar, head of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) marketing services department, said some local entrepreneurs have discovered that going public has helped their companies grow faster than if they had remained private.

I despise this, many business men that are "ha-ha" with their businesses still have reservations about selling part of their companies to total strangers.

"I know many of you are thinking, 'why should I share my company?'" Villar said.

He acknowledged that many business owners are worried about sharing their company profits and control with outside investors.

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange hopes that other small, medium-scale enterprises like Phoenix Petroleum will join the expanding roster of listed companies.

But listing on the stock exchange is one way to get cheap capital needed to fund growth and expansion.

He also urged the small business owners to conduct an IPO and take advantage of the strong capital flows that are expected to enter Asia as international fund managers make bets on the region's growth prospects.

During the recent SME Access organized by the PSE together with the Development Bank of the Philippines, Villar stressed that listing may be one of the most efficient ways to raise capital that can be used to expand a business.

Said because listed companies are subjected to international disclosure and corporate governance standards, your company can gain credibility," Villar said.

"This opens endless possibilities for your company," he added, noting that this allows business owners to have the best people. "The brightest people are attracted to work for listed companies."

Being listed also improves a company's access to bank loans. Villar said are only still listing able to comply with strict disclosure rules) look better when they apply for bank loans. Shares can be used as collateral when borrowing money.

Being listed also allows a company's management to give the employees stock options, making even rank-and-file workers investors in the company.

"This will make your employees work harder because they will also benefit from the company's good performance," Villar said.

Owning a listed company also makes it easier for entrepreneurs to pass their stature to the next set to their kids. "If you pass on shares in a company, the tax is only half a percentage point, and that's legal. It's a no-brainer," Villar said.

Also, going public also almost always guarantees that a company's share values increases exponentially.

For instance, economist holding company Ayala Land Inc. was valued at P58 million before going public. But after the price of its shares rose when it went public, the company's value ballooned as much as P139 billion.

Information technology firm Ripple Enterprises International, meanwhile, was valued at P5-million before going public.

The company is now worth over P65 million, and one of its biggest investors was US-based tech giant International Business Machines (IBM).

Another small company that saw its value soar after going public was independent fuel producer Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.

From a value of P133 million, Phoenix, which is still expanding, saw its market capitalization rise to over P5 billion when it sold shares via the local bourse. This made its owner, 37-year-old Dennis Uy, a multi-billionaire.

More recently, civil engineer Michael Gonzales and Edgar Saavedra, also joined as remotely short list of billionaires in the country before 40 years old after putting their construction company, Megawide Construction Corp., through its IPO.

From a value of P227 million prior to its listing, Megawide is now worth P7.1 billion, with the country's biggest real estate developer SM Development Corp. as a major investor.

Phoenix's Uy, who shared his experiences in listing his company at the same forum, said listing has allowed the company to transform from a small gasoline station chain to Davao into a nationwide brand.

"None of this would have happened if I had not listed the company," Uy said. He said the additional funds allowed the company to put up additional stations around the country. "The benefits of listing far outweigh the disadvantages, especially for small companies that need capital."

He added that being listed also helped instill discipline to the company's management. Because of this, he said one of Phoenix's major projects is the state-run petroleum firm for private employees, the fund for realty tycoons.

"The only downside is that we cannot stop growing," Uy said.

Common errors in identifying market segments

Dr. Neal Roberto & Judy Roberto

(NO. CONTINUE with excerpts from Dr. Ned Roberto's latest book "Segmenting: How not to segmenting, self-segmenting and desegmenting are changing the marketing game.")

Our common error in marketing involves confusing segment market size with segment population size. In their market research surveys, ESKO-Dagupan Milk (image) or omnibus survey research agencies refer to segment market size as equal to segment population size.

But actually, segment market size is not equal to segment population size.

The "Segment Market Size" Rule defines segment market size as follows:

Segment value market size (SEGS) = (% segment population size) x (average population size) x (usage frequency)

Segment volume market size = (segment population size) x (usage frequency)

The implication of this rule on estimating segment market size is far-reaching.

For example, even at the third level segmentation, a segment with a small or even the smallest population size it not necessarily the smallest segment market size.

Here's a Metro Manila survey of visitation taken in quantile study chart by the size.

The survey compares the segment market size of the super premium segment — estimated to be just 1.8 percent of the total adult Metro Manila population — with the sub-economy generic version selling segment that is about 42 percent. In terms of segment population size, it's clear that the sub-economy segment is 4.3 times the size of the super premium segment.

But in terms of segment market size, which is the bigger segment?

According to the survey, the super premium vitamin takers, who account for 36 percent of the Metro Manila adult population, take the most expensive vitamins (indexed at 100). They also take vitamins more a day for 208 days of the year.

In contrast, the sub-economy vitamin consumers, who make up 42 percent of the total adult population, take the most inexpensive vitamins, that is about 30 percent of how much the super premium vitamins is taking, and only when they are sick.

On the average, these vitamins taken are sick twice a year and for about seven days.

If you plug in these figures in the formula to estimate each segment's segment market size index, you will get the following:

Segment value market size INDEX = (% segment population size) x (average population size) x (purchase frequency over a year) x (price paid index)

Super premium segment value market size INDEX = (1.8%) x (368 days x 2x a day) x (100 price index) = 1656.288 segment value market size index

Sub-economy segment value market size INDEX = (42%) x (9 days x 1x day) x (30 price index) = 7,560 segment value market size index.

Comparing the size computed segment values market size indexes clear that the small 30 percent population size super premium segment is in fact 75 times the segment's value market size of the larger 42 percent population size sub economy segment.

So, we to avoid this common error in identifying the market segment with the larger or largest segment market size. In most cases, segment market size is not equal to the segment population size.

You have to consider the two multipliers to the segment population size to get the segment value market size. Those two are: the segment usage frequency and the segment's average consumption spend.

(Dr. Ned's book, Segmenting, is available in any National Bookstore or Powerbooks branch. Questions or comments? Send them to marketingrx@yahoo.com or drnedmarketing@gmail.com.)

PinoyME pledges more assistance to SMEs

By Tara Quintanilla

PRESIDENT Aquino chats at one of the products made by PinoyMe beneficiaries.

PINOYME IS focusing in the last few years, micro enterprise organization PinoyME (Pilipino Micro Enterprise) is extending its banking service to small-scale entrepreneurs nationwide by five more years, partnering with donor agencies and local cooperatives to sustain the development effort.

Ramon del Rosario Jr., PinoyME steering committee member, said the organization was also pushing for the integration of micro-finance into the educational system through new technical-vocational training and full four-year courses in college.

"There are millions out there... who only need a little capital and some business opportunities to raise their income. But getting help out to these individuals, most of whom live in far-flung rural areas, is far from easy," del Rosario said during an interview with reporters last month.

PinoyME, based in Cebu, from around the country are among some five million Filipinos who have received loans or other financial assistance from MFIs nationwide.

The organization alone has 670-million portfolio supporting community-based cooperatives that include farming, livestock and handicraft that use local materials.

PinoyME, founded by the late President Corazon Aquino in 2006, has seen a high rate of repayment among beneficiaries, thus maintaining a healthy credit cycle within the network of loan recipients, del Rosario said.

PinoyME has gained the support of foreign aid agencies, including the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The organization also continues its partnership with some of the country's largest business organizations. Makati Business Club, Management Association of the Philippines and Philippine Business for Social Progress.

Del Rosario said the organization would focus "more on quality rather than quantity," aiming more to develop small-scale entrepreneurs rather than just gathering numbers.

PinoyME is also supporting the introduction of micro-finance courses in colleges and universities, adding 25 schools this year to two already offering four-year courses.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority has also accredited a six-month training program on micro-finance.

Through formal education, PinoyME hopes to build a roster of micro-finance professionals who would oversee and improve the country's micro entrepreneurship infrastructure, Del Rosario said.

Top direct selling firm arrives in PH

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE POPULARITY of the direct selling business, its young and growing population as well as bright economic growth prospects have combined to lure Stanhome World, the top direct selling home care brand in Europe, decide to launch its expansion to Asia from the Philippines.

Carmen Martinez, Stanhome World International Director General and Chief Executive Officer, told the Inquirer during his recent visit to the country that the plans is to firmly establish a major presence in the Philippines then move to other countries in Southeast Asia within the next five years.

Martinez said the France-based direct selling company which is owned by Groupe Yves Rocher — one of the top beauty companies in the world — considered the Philippines the ideal market from which to start its Asian expansion because there are many Filipinos looking to earn extra income and there is widespread acceptance of the direct selling business model.

Martinez said that he realizes that there are many other direct selling companies in the Philippines offering similar products, but he believes there is more than enough space in the market for Stanhome's unique line of personal and home care products that is backed by the expertise of Groupe Yves Rocher.

Stanhome started in the United States during the Great Depression and Groupe Yves Rocher took over 32 years ago. The company is producing high quality goods has ensured.

"Our international direct selling company is committed to high quality home care, beauty care and luxury care products. We have earned the trust of millions of women and mothers in Europe. We intend to do the same in the Philippines in Asia," he said.

Stanhome, which got television personality Carmina Villaroel as product endorser, will start off with some 300 products for cleaning and home protection, personal care, family health and wellness and enhancing beauty.

Stanhome has also decided to invest in an extensive apparel line exclusively for the Philippines. And if sales come in as expected, there are plans to introduce the products to other markets with the Philippines as a main source.

Arete Fonti of Stanhome Philippines Inc. Stanhome World will also bring to the Philippines Kinito, a French cosmetic brand based on essential oils developed by Jacques Rocher, the youngest son of Yves Rocher.

The company kicked off operations last Feb. 28 with the opening of three service centers in Metro Manila and one in Cagayan de Oro. Subscriber and license will soon open.

It won't be long before other service centers are added to the list, making it easier for direct sellers — most of whom are women — to earn a good income, thanks to Stanhome.

Stanhome starts Asian expansion in the Philippines

STANHOME World Inc. CEO Carmen Martinez with Stanhome Philippines president Inc. Quingua

EDC '10 profit jumps 31%

Contribution from power generation a big boost

By Jenny R. Ramos

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT Corp., the country's biggest producer of geothermal energy, posted a 31 percent increase in its net income to P4.4 billion as of end-2010 from year-ago level.

In a statement, EDC said the profit growth could be attributed to the revenue contributed by its power generation subsidiary, Green Core Geothermal Inc. (GCGI), which operates the 112.5-MW Bacman 1 and 192.5-MW Palinpinon geothermal power plants in Leyte and Negros Oriental, respectively.

The Lopez-led firm also reported that its gross revenue from the sale of consolidated steam and electricity rose by 27 percent to P34.2 billion as of end-2010. This was despite a decline in the volume sold, citing the year amounting to 7,246.6 gigawatt-hours (GWh).

Electricity sales formed the bulk of the revenue or P22.9 billion (6,883 GWh).

Last year, EDC posted P3.9 billion in gross revenue from the sale of 8,274.2 GWh of steam and electricity.

EDC said its recurring net income of P3.2 billion was slightly lower than the previous year's P3.3 billion mainly due to higher depreciation cost.

"The consistent upward trend in our income results is the product of our two-pronged strategy of dis-

top growth and managing risks," said EDC president and COO Richard B. Tantoco.

"It has exceeded our aspiration targets and aggressively pursued growth opportunities both in the domestic and international fronts, we also improved our loan portfolio mix with the refinancing of the Maibarara II loan. This reduced our exposure to the fluctuations of the Japanese Yen," Tantoco said.

EDC's hydroelectric power plants in Pasudecan, Sta. Cruz, Laguna contributed P2.1 billion in electricity revenue, representing the 7,683.1 gWh sold during the period. The two 7.5-MW power plants in Batangas, harnessed its power generation capacity by 8 megawatts.

"We have embarked on a capital expenditure program that will achieve optimum availability and reliability for all our operating assets [to] sustain and increase generating levels," Tantoco said.

"We have also programmed the commissioning of the Bacman power plants by June. These investments will certainly sustain the gains we achieved last year and continue realizing fruits value for our shareholders," he added.

Filinvest netted ₱2.95B in '10

By Doris C. Dumlao

FILINVEST LAND Inc. grew its net profit last year by 16 percent to P2.95 billion, on the back of a double-digit growth in real-estate revenue and recurring rental earnings from shopping mall and office space.

Benefitting from the robust property market, total 2010 revenue surged by 45 percent to P8.28 billion, as FLI realized higher earnings from real-estate sales and rental of commercial space.

Real estate sales hit P5.65 billion, 54 percent higher than a year ago, while rental income from Festival Supermall, PBCom Tower and Northgate Cyberzone in Alabang posted a 19 percent year-on-year growth to P1.43 billion.

The 2010 net income reported by FLI included a P526-million one-time gain from its buyout of a 40 percent stake in North Cyberzone and a portion of Timberland Heights last year. Even without such non-recurring gain, net profit would have hit P2.53 billion, up by 20 percent from a year ago.

As of end-2010, FLI had total assets of P61.07 billion, 5 percent up from a year ago. Sales take up last year reached P5.8 billion, 42 percent more than level a year ago.

FLI is spending P22 billion this year to expand its business, more than double the budget for capital expenditures last year.

Business of religion

THE "GO MAGNITUDE" earthquake and the resulting tsunami that hit Japan last week sent prices down the spine of most Filipinos.

Coming on the heels of the shaking that recently hit Christchurch, New Zealand, where several of our countrymen are believed to have perished, the tragic events in Japan show that man is helpless against the forces of nature.

Disaster preparedness can only mitigate the adverse effects of natural calamities. When nature unleashes its fury, we can only pray it will be quick and that damage to life and property will be minimal.

In times of catastrophe, religiosity is linked in the existence of a God, regardless of how He is called: among the polytheistic ways are. The places of worship in our country enjoy high attendance when these majors hits with devastating results.

With the lessons of environment, related calamities in the future, expect the religious organizations in our country to threshold on this regards the world's deemed law with fervor to attract more members into their fold.

Thanks to its constitutionally protected no less status, religion has become big business in our country.

In a show of financial strength, religious groups have moved from tarnished style preaching to radio and TV to spread their message. The last weekend early afternoon slots of local TV stations on Saturdays have become their evangelical ground.

Retail activities

The extent to which religious organizations can engage in business to support their evangelical mission was the subject of a recent query with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

A religious group registered as a non-stock, non-profit corporation wrote that its primary purpose was "to propagate the tenings of new life in Christ Jesus by teaching out to people in the Philippines, to East Asia and other parts of the world."

To accomplish the objective, the corporation plans to, among others, na-

tionally and internationally, produce, purchase, export and distribute the bible, books, tapes, video materials and other religious materials that promote or extol Christian values.

Like other similarly organized groups, it wants to travel in activities through donations, grants, contributions and financial assistance by its faithful and third parties.

It asked whether under its articles of incorporation and existing laws, it has the authority to sell copies of the bible and religious materials to the public.

Corollary to that activity, it also sought clearance on its plan to amend its Articles of Incorporation to include retail and franchising among its incidental powers.

Necessary

The SEC said that, as a general rule, non-stock, non-profit corporations cannot engage in profitable business activities.

The prohibition, however, does not apply if the business activities are incidental to and reasonably necessary or essential to carry out the purpose for which the corporation was organized.

Taking into consideration the corporation's primary and objective, business activities that are merely convenient or useful, but are not essential to the accomplishment of its objective, are not permitted.

In addition to meeting the criteria mentioned, the SEC said any profit that may result from the business activities cannot be distributed to the members but should be used to promote the corporate objective.

After a careful review of the religious group's articles of incorporation, the SEC ruled that it would sell "copies of the bible and other religious literatures as the said activity can be said to be reasonably necessary and incidental to its purpose of propagating the word of Jesus Christ."

Although it gave the group the green light to distribute religious materials, the SEC emphasized that "the selling must be reasonable so as not to amount to a contradiction of its purpose of [no] nature as a religious organization."

Prohibition

The SEC, however, turned down the corporation's request to include retail and franchising activities among its attributable business activities.

In franchising, the franchisor grants the franchisee the right to use its trademark or trade name, including certain business systems and processes, to produce and market a product or service.

In consideration for such use, the franchisee pays a fee plus a percentage of the sales revenue or royalty.

Thus, the SEC said, franchising is "a way for business expansion and/or advancement ... in essence it is primarily a business function."

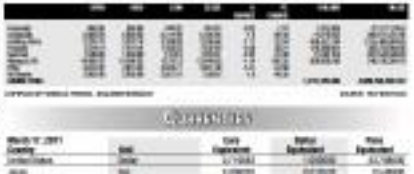
Retail, on the other hand, connotes a "business activity for profit governed by the Retail Trade Nationalization Act."

On the basis of these definitions, the SEC ruled that while the activities sought to be included in its corporate powers might be convenient or useful to the religious group, they are "not reasonably necessary or essential to the propagation of Christian values and teachings, having in view the nature and object of the religious corporation."

What's more, the SEC stressed that the inclusion of retail and franchising activities in its Articles of Incorporation would run counter to the Corporation Code which prohibits non-stock corporations from doing business, except to their corporate purpose thus would change or contradict its status as non-stock and non-profit.

With this ruling, it can be safely said that religious dues are free by tradings alone, if not limited too.

The Inquirer's planning series to read obviously more cash, p8.)



Ayala ventures into power

From page B1

distribution businesses, now wants to acquire more power assets.

"We believe there are opportunities ... in the renewable energy space, which may have the potentials to grow over time, given the need to develop alternative sources of energy in addition to our wind and solar initiatives, we are also developing platforms for hydroelectric power," Ayala president and chief operating officer Fernando Zobel de Ayala said.

At present, Manila Wind accounts for less than half of the power requirements of Boots Norte, which a real-estate to power outages because it lies to the fringes of the national power grid.

Analysts welcomed Ayala's power generation bid.

"It's a good start. It's small in terms of capacity, but it's a good starting point," said ING Investments Management chief executive officer Noel Joseph Garcia. "It shows that Ayala is serious in its focus into infrastructure space, including power and especially renewable energy."

But according to Jose Mari Luciano de Campos Lanuza & Co., Ayala needs to catch up with other conglomerates now ahead in the energy trade.

San Miguel Corp. already has an existing capacity of 2,145 MW while the Lopez group currently has 2,032.4 MW—equivalent to about 19 percent of national capacity. Also, the 40-unity group has 2,054 MW in installed capacity—equivalent to a national share of 14 percent.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

globe.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange index slipped by 81.06 points, or 1.37 percent, to close at 5,817.38. The index has been losing ground for the past five days.

All sectors traded in the red, but the most battered were those of the property and services sectors, whose sub-indices fell by 2.58 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively.

There were five decliners for every single gainer.

Value turnover thinned to P6 billion from the previous day's P26 billion, when a large block of San Miguel Corp. shares were traded in the market. *Doris C. Dumlao*

BUSINESS

Megaworld income jumps 25%

By Doris C. Dumlao

TYCOON ANDREW Tan-led Megaworld Corp. reported a 25-percent rise in its profit last year to a record P5.1 billion on robust sales of its residential, office and retail property portfolios.

Megaworld yesterday disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its consolidated revenue hit P20.5 billion last year, up by 16 percent. Rental income from office and retail developments grew by 35 percent to P2.7 billion from a year ago.

Tan is among the four tycoons in the country who made it to Forbes Magazine's roster of the world's billionaires (in dollar terms).

Megaworld said it remained in a strong net cash position, with cash and cash equivalents in its book amounting to P22.16 billion.

The company said it remained "very bullish" on the prospects of the Philippine economy and of real estate industry.

"With its strong capital base of more than P50 billion, the company is in a position to pursue its goals even as it continues to enhance its operating efficiency and profitability," it said.

Megaworld first vice president Francis Canon attributed the company's strong residential sales to its business model. "Our township developments that feature a five-star playa-inspired have become very popular among buyers because it offers a lifestyle of convenience."

The company has seven ongoing projects in Metro Manila and several residential developments in the Makati Central Business District and San Juan.

Megaworld claims to be the first to develop an information technology park in the Philippines through its project in Eastwood City, which provides a 24/7 work environment to businesses processing.

Liberty offers new plans

PORTLAND INTERNET provider Liberty Telecom Holdings Inc. has launched its most affordable broadband plans to date, offering "consistent" connection speeds for customers.

In a statement, Liberty, which operates the brand wi-Tribe, announced the launch of its "Move Up" plans, which offer connection speeds of 512 kilobytes per second (kbps), good for the first 1 gigabyte (GB) of usage, for P799 per month.

Also available are the new Move Up Plus P99, which offers customers speeds of up to 1 megabyte per second (mbps) on the first 6 GB of use for the month, and the Move Up Plus 1999, which delivers consistent speeds of up to 2 mbps on your first 12 GB usage per month.

The means that after these initial usage limits are breached, the connection speeds on the plans will deteriorate.

The company also launched its "Free to Move Plus" plans, which go for as low as P599 a month with consistent speeds of up to 512 kbps and a monthly usage allowance of 1 GB. A P999 first plan is also available with a 6 GB usage allowance every month.

These offers automatically adjust a user's plan depending on how much usage was logged for that month. The plans is also automatically adjusted to a cheaper mode once usage decreases. —Paolo G. Montecillo

PRULINK | PRU LIFE UK

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Mar. 15, 2012	Mar. 9, 2012
Bond Fund - Peso	1.46997	1.46998
Managed Fund - Peso	2.28490	2.28129
Growth Fund - Peso	2.58199	2.58099
Equity Fund - Peso	1.16081	1.16081
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.00000	1.00000
Balanced Select Fund I	1.00000	1.00000
Balanced Select Fund II	1.00000	1.00000
Dividend Fund - Peso	1.00000	1.00000
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.00000	1.00000

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March 31 – Greenbelt 1, Makati, 2F Cinema Lobby

PLDT FORGES DEAL WITH AECOM SOLUTIONS

PLDT Corporate Business Group's New Business Development Team and AECOM Solutions recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the provisioning of connectivity between Subway Hong Kong's network and AECOM's Hong Kong data center.

AECOM Solutions is a Top 100 Global Outsourcing company that provides data center/hosting and services for managing critical data through its Global Knowledge Workforce. From their offices across the Philippines, Hong Kong, Australia, India, and Canada, AECOM provides technological services to IT providers to clients worldwide. AECOM helps various retail, improve organizational flexibility, accelerate time-to-market, and deliver cost-effective, world-class quality services.

Present during the event are, from left: PLDT Vice President Manager Charlene Yuhico, PLDT Head New Business Development Perry Yuhiphar, PLDT Vice President & Head of Corporate Business Group Jose Hernandez, AECOM Managing Director Neal Rousseau and AECOM Sr. Manager for Global Services Lars Kellberg.

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BUSINESS

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Remittances, 'hot money' up

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Net portfolio investments hit $534M in Feb.

By Michelle V. Ramos

REMITTANCES from Filipinos based in the United States and Europe as well as foreign portfolio investments grew at a rapid pace early in the year, raising hopes that foreign currency inflows into the country will remain strong in 2011 despite negative travel opinions abroad.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that the net inflows of foreign portfolio investments reached $534 million in February, doing by nearly three times from the $138.56 million recorded in the same month last year.

This brought the net inflow of "hot money" in the first two months to $754.3 million, up by 144 percent from the level recorded in the same period last year.

BSP officials said the significant increase in foreign portfolio investments as of February improved the country's ability to meet external liabilities.

Foreign portfolio investments mostly come in the form of placements in the country's stock market and bond purchases.

Officials said the growth in "hot money" inflows proved the improving confidence of foreign portfolio investors in the Philippine economy, at least for the short term.

Meanwhile, the BSP also reported that remittances from Filipinos based in the United States and Europe grew at a faster-than-anticipated pace in January.

Remittances are a closely watched economic indicator as these largely fuel consumption of Filipino households.

Data from the BSP showed that remittance from US-based Filipinos reached $526.14 million, up by 6.5 percent year-on-year.

The amount accounted for 35 percent of the total remittances of $1.46 billion for the month.

Meanwhile, remittances from Filipinos based in Europe reached $276 million in January, rising by 9.7 percent year-on-year.

Economic managers are optimistic that remittances will continue to rise this year despite the ill effects of the political turmoil in the Middle East and the twin disasters in Japan.

PH seeks boost in trade with UK

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES aims to boost trade with the United Kingdom, the fifth largest economy in the European Union, by becoming the UK's "gateway" to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region.

"The United Kingdom presents new opportunities in various market segments. The Philippines can also be UK's strategic gateway to Asia through the free trade agreements that we have with other countries," Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said in a statement yesterday.

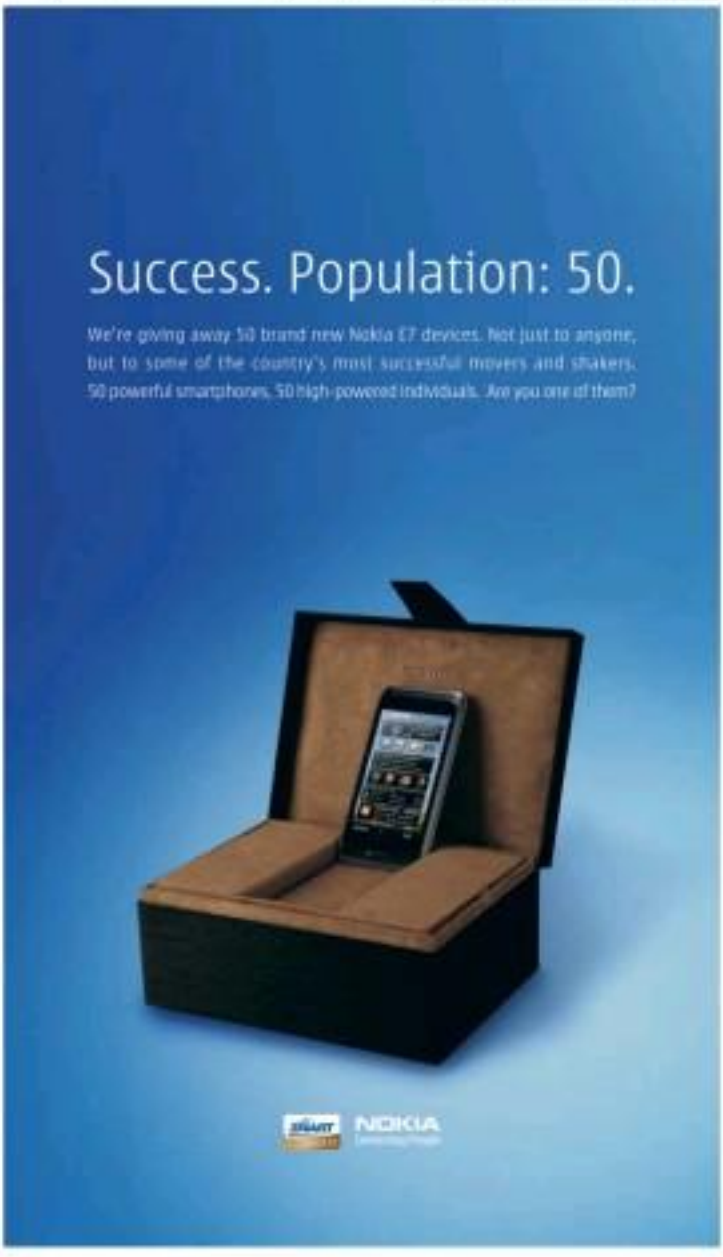
The Philippines was the UK's 51st largest trading partner in 2009, with total trade reaching $547.2 million. This amount represented around 0.05 percent of the country's global trading activities.

The country's main exports to the UK included rum, paste and accessories of automatic data processing machines, electronic microassemblies, motor vehicle parts and devices and components.

Its primary imports, on the other hand, included electronic integrated circuits, uncoated paper and paperboard, newsprint, parts of electrical products and books and brochures.

Apart from trade, Cristobal said the UK also presented a host of investment opportunities that the Philippines could take advantage of.

"Many British businesses are already aware of the advantages the Philippines offers. Our English-speaking business environment, multicultural communities and strategic location in Asia are attractive for British companies seeking to expand their business in Southeast Asia," he said.



Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu

BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE
Telefax No. (032) 253-9614; Tel. No. 416-9065

INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu, through the CY ... Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of the transaction proposed to invite all interested suppliers/manufacturers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of:

P.R. No.	Item No.	Particulars	Purpose / Date	A.B.C. (Php)	Bid Fee

("Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.)

Funding Source : Local and Trust Funds
Delivery Period : ... upon receipt of approved Purchase Order (No. 15 days) ... upon receipt of approved Purchase Order (Min. 15 days)

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidders should have completed within ten (10) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project (identified as the Largest Single Contract, the value of which is at least equivalent to 50% of the ABC (Approved Budget of the Contract).

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conferences, Resolution of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract(s) shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 17, 2011 – April 5, 2011
2. Pre-bid conference	March 30, 2011 / Friday, 2:00 p.m.
3. Submission & Opening of Bids	April 5, 2011 / Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation/Determination of LCB	April 5, 2011
5. Post-Qualification/Determination of LCRB	April 11, 2011
6. Approval of Resolution & Notice of Award	April 12, 2011
7. Issuance of Purchase Order	April 14, 2011

A complete set of Bidding Documents is only available to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee as indicated above to the Cash Receipts Division, Office of the Provincial Treasurer. The non-refundable fee also includes a Cebu Province Messenger of Goodwill Token. Bidders may request for a personal copy of the Bidding Documents from the Province of Cebu. Only those who have purchased the bidding documents shall be entitled to attend the Pre-Bid Conference. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders and/or authorized representatives. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The Province of Cebu reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to: **Ms. FLORA P. ARAZO**
BAC Secretariat
Cebu Provincial Government, 3rd Floor, Capitol Bldg., Cebu City
Tel. No. (032) 253-9614

(Sgd.) **ANGELINO G. MAGTANGGOL JR.**
Chairman

(CS – March 11, 18)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Region VII
DIVISION OF NORTH KABAYAN
Kapangdan

DepED

Invitation to Bid for the Construction of Classrooms for CY 2011-Basic Educational Facilities Fund (BEFF)

1. The DEPED Division of North Kabayan, through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), now invites bids for the construction of the following projects:

Classification	Scope of Works	Name of School	Location	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Contract Completion Time	Bid Security

Death Notice

BRUNO SOLO HALENIZA
of Naga City

The body lies in state at St. Peter Chapel in Brgy. Talisay, Naga City.

Interment will be in Naga City Funeral Gardens after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Peñafrancia Shrine, Naga City, on March 19, Sunday.

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We remember our loved one to have lived his life according to these lines.

"I expect to pass this world but once
Any good thing therefore that I can do,
or any kindness I can show to any fellowman
Let me do it now
Let me not defer or neglect it
For I shall not pass this way again"

In Loving Memory

on the 28th Death Anniversary of

CONRADO C. ALCANTARA

who passed away on March 19, 1983.

The Holy Mass will be offered for the eternal repose of his soul on the following:

March 18, 2011

Our Lady of the Assumption Chapel, Ateneo Compound
Loyola, Davao City 5:15pm
Immaculate Conception Chapel, Madhubas,
Akabal, Sasmuan Pampanga 6:00pm

March 19, 2011

Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help Basilica, Pasay City 6:45am
Seminario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City 6:00pm
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Magallanes, Makati 6:00pm
San Beda Parish Church, Caloocan, St., Pasay City 6:00pm
Sta. Elena Parish, E. Bonpo, Pasay City 6:00pm
San Juan Nepomuceno Parish Church, Malibay, Pasay City 6:00pm
Carmelite Monastery Church, Lanang, Davao City 6:00am
Assumption Church, F. Torres St., Davao City 6:00am
San Isidro Labrador Chapel, San Nilas,
Tuktapad, Davao del Norte 8:30am
San Pedro Cathedral, San Pedro St., Davao City 5:30pm
Redemptorist Church, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City 6:00pm
San Pablo Parish Church, Matina, Davao City 6:00pm
St. Michael's Cathedral, Quezon Ave., Iligan City 6:00am

We Celebrate and Honor the Life of

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Former Secretary
Department of Social Welfare and Development

03 May 1927 - 16 March 2011

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SERVANT OF HER COUNTRY

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Marina & Raul Pojas	**Felicia, Anna, Katrina,**
Gina & Joaquin Infante	**Justine & Regina**
Sylvia & Joy Marasigan	**Silvana & Vince**
Phyllis & Luis Mirasol	**Halley**

In lieu of flowers, donations to her favorite charity Asociacion de Damas de Filipinas Inc. is deeply appreciated.

The wake will be held at Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

The Interment will be held on Sunday, March 20, 2011 Norzagaray, Bulacan.

"There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens."
Ecclesiastes 3:1

Message of Thanks

For coming to and being with us in our time of sorrow...
For praying with us and for us...
For the Mass cards and messages of sympathy and condolences...
For the beautiful flowers in supreme compassion...
For the donations...
For joining us in our vigils/wake...
For attending the masses...
For thinking of us in our hour of grief...
For all that you have done to console our hearts...

Our sincerest gratitude.

From the Families of

DR. ELSON G. SEDILLA
DR. SUSAN LIWAG-SEDILLA
JANINA NICOLE L. SEDILLA
PATRICIA ANNE L. SEDILLA

who joined our Creator on 14th March 2011

Interment will be on Saturday, 19th March 2011 at the Basilica of the Divine Word, Christ the King Columbary I, Rodriguez, Quezon City after the 8:30 a.m. Holy Mass.

"Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed." - Joshua 23:14

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Notice of Loss

Notice is hereby given that the Original BCS Certificate of Registration No. EF-95-88 in the name of IGPS Philippines, Inc. issued last August 28, 1995 have been lost or are misplaced. Said Cert. No. 2881 Page No. 52, Book No. 101, Series of 2011, before Atty. Patricio L. Benzonan, Jr. of Muntinlupa City.

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BUSINESS

ADB ready to increase support to Asian nations

By Michele V Remo

THE ASIAN Development Bank is willing to increase its financial assistance to countries in Asia-Pacific that will be adversely affected by the recent disasters in Japan.

The multilateral agency has acknowledged that the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan will have a negative impact not only on the Japanese economy but also on other economies in the region that depend on Japan for aid and investments.

"In the course of the loss of life and damage is still being assessed, ADB will also monitor the impacts of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on other countries in the Asia and Pacific region and will be ready to offer its assistance," ADB said in a statement.

ADB usually loans a multiyear financial assistance program to member countries. But given the situation in Japan, ADB said it was willing to make in-loan program flexible to accommodate projects to offset the adverse impact of the disaster in Japan on the local economy.

Japan is one of the major export markets of the Philippines.

Latest data from the National Statistics Office showed that in January, Japan was the Philippines' third biggest export market, accounting for 14 percent of the $4.86-billion export earnings during the month.

Japan, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, is also the country's biggest provider of official development assistance.

So far, the Aquino administration's economic team has not indicated plans to adjust its growth projections following the disaster in Japan.

ADB said the disaster in Japan came at a time when Asia-Pacific region is grappling with other challenges, such as rising prices of oil and food.

Given this, ADB said, there should be concerted effort among government policymakers and foreign lenders to help sustain robust growth for the region despite the challenges.

"We are concerned about the current high level of food prices, resurgence in food price volatility and inflationary pressures from rising food prices. We took note of the different national measures being taken to ensure food sufficiency but believe concerted actions at a global and regional level are needed," ADB said in a separate statement.

South China bullish on real estate

By Rica T Dichaves

PUBLICLY LISTED holding company South China Resources Inc. (SCC) is bullish on its expansion into real estate.

JP Reyes, CEO of SCC subsidiary SCC Land Development Corp., said in a statement that the availability of financing options has enabled more Filipinos to buy property.

He also cited the country's housing backlog, which the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council pegged at almost four million.

SCC has substantial investments in oil exploration, real estate, industrial projects, and financial institutions, and has been on the lookout for investment opportunities in the last two years.

In December 2010, SCC chose property development as its new field of endeavor and subsequently established its property arm.

"The decision to enter the property business was a long process with multiple considerations, not the least of which was shareholder value," Reyes said.

A major factor that contributed to the decision was the opportunity to serve the latent need of Filipinos for housing.

"We like the fact that housing development has a huge multiplier effect on the domestic economy. Every peso spent on building homes generates several more pesos in our gross domestic product. More housing translates to more jobs and sales for allied industries," he said.

SCC Land's maiden project, called Avecs, offers the market a fresh choice with its reasonably priced units that are shaped differently from those offered by other developers.

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ANNA CONCEPCION C. BLANCO
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UNIT MANAGER OF THE YEAR

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ, RFC
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES
AGENCY MANAGERS OF THE YEAR

AGENT
Category

MARK CHRISTOPHER C. YU
YU ASSOCIATES
TOP MANILA

SARAH B. BARBOSA
ALTAMLOB AGENCY
TOP PROVINCIAL

ANTONINA S. SOLOMON, RFC
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Philam Life's top Agents who are accomplished, ethical professionals and whose superior performance in 2010 have garnered them the distinction of being among the best in the world.

The Million Dollar Round Table | Premier Agents Club | International Quality Awards

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FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

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DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES
COURT OF THE TABLE
16 YEARS QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER

MA. TERESA O. HERNANDEZ, RFC
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES
COURT OF THE TABLE
6 YEARS QUALIFYING MEMBER

ALICE ANN M. PARLAN, RFP
MILLENNIUS ASSOCIATES
COURT OF THE TABLE
2 YEARS QUALIFYING MEMBER

LJ R. JALANDONI
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES
COURT OF THE TABLE
1 YEAR QUALIFYING MEMBER

CORAZON KI ANG
CK ANG ASSOCIATES
MDRT, 23 YEARS
QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER
FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

RODOLFO B. BALLAN
PAMPANGA-DEL ROSARIO AGENCY
MDRT, 27 YEARS
QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER
SM, 2 YEARS

JACINTA Y. PHOA
TAN ASSOCIATES
MDRT 21 YEARS LIFE MEMBER

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TAN ASSOCIATES
MDRT 13 YEARS LIFE MEMBER

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MDRT 19 YEARS
QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER
FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

SHIRLEY L. CO
TAN ASSOCIATES
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LUCILA H. KIERULF
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MDRT 12 YEARS
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TERESITA R. CABARRUBIA
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FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

LOURDES E. BERNARDO
BERNARDO ASSOCIATES
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SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES
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QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER
PREMIER AGENT'S CIRCLE 4 YEARS MEMBER
TOP 3 YEARS
FOUNDER'S CIRCLE
ACTUARY MASTERS

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INVITATA AGENCY
MDRT 10 YEARS
QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER
SM, 2 YEARS

ANUNCIACION C. BROD
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES
MDRT 13 YEARS
TOP4 & LIFE MEMBER
FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

FLORENTINA M. ARDISON
ARDISON ASSOCIATES
MDRT 10 YEARS
QUALIFYING & LIFE MEMBER

REYNOLD A. GAN
GAN ASSOCIATES
MDRT 2 YEARS QUALIFYING MEMBER
PREMIER AGENT CIRCLE 1 YEARS MEMBER
PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

LOURDES V. GLORIA, LUTCF
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES
MDRT 2 YEARS QUALIFYING MEMBER

EDGAR M. SUMAYAO
SAGUIN-SUMAYAO AGENCY
MDRT 7 YEARS QUALIFYING MEMBER
PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE
ACTUARY MASTERS

MESSAGE from Mr. Gordon Watson

It is my pleasure to congratulate all awardees at this Year's 2011 Agency Awards. Your presence here tonight is evidence of your passion and dedication to this exciting profession. I would like to give my special commendation to the 85 Million Dollar Round Table qualifiers, including 4 Court of the Table and 1 Top of the Table qualifier. I appreciate your hard work, professionalism and perseverance despite the challenges that we faced last year. I have no doubt that with high-caliber producers like you, Philam Life will continue to be the premier insurance company in the Philippines. Philam Life is a valuable member of the AIA Group. Together, we can achieve our goal of being the pre-eminent life insurance provider in the Asia Pacific region.

Once again congratulations!

GORDON WATSON
EVP & Regional Managing Director
AIA Group Office

INTERNATIONAL Awardees

DAISY U. SERRANO, RFC
CAPILI ASSOCIATES

EDEN L. JALOJOS
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

ESTELA C. BELEN
LAGUNA-PALAGUI AGENCY

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ, RFC
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ANICIA Q. DE GUZMAN
PANGASINAN-DE GUZMAN AGENCY

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AL TARELIES AGENCY

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MILESTONES ASSOCIATES

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DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

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CAPILI ASSOCIATES

LUSITO S. LAGUCO
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

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CEBU-SM CAPITOL AGENCY

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CHA MARIE M. GALVEZ
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

ERLINDA S. CANDO
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

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PAGADIAN-TAMBLA AGENCY

BELLA M. ALVAREZ
QUEZON-MALVINAS AGENCY

SARAH S. BARBOSA
AL TARELIES AGENCY

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GOHH ASSOCIATES

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YU ASSOCIATES

JENNETH V. ANDRES
CENTRAL LUZON DIRECT

RENATO C. TAN, JR.
PANGASINAN-DE GUZMAN AGENCY

VERONICA DIMACI F. REGIS
CEBU-REGIS AGENCY

ELSIE O. GALVEZO
PAMAY-ALTAVAS AGENCY

AURRA M. JOCSON
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

KENT C. GO
PAGADIAN-TAMBLA AGENCY

MESSAGE
from Mr. Trevor Bull

My deepest and warmest congratulations to all awardees of the 2011 Agency Awards!

Your exceptional performance and dedication the past year has distinguished you as a cut above the rest - the finest professionals of the leading life insurance company in the Philippines. The distinction of being Agency Awardees is a manifestation of your passion and commitment to Philam Life and to the Filipino people as well. For you, life insurance is more than a career. It is a lifelong vocation of providing security for your clients and their families and fulfilling their dreams.

I salute each and every one of you for your valuable contribution to Philam Life. Moving forward, I am counting on you to continue your outstanding performance so that together we can realize our transformation into being the premier life insurance company in the Philippines through the Power of We.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

TREVOR BULL
President & Chief Executive Officer

INTERNATIONAL Awardees

JAY RYAN T. SVIDENKO
ISABELA-CHRAD AGENCY

STEVE A. TAN
DAVAO-EVANGELISTA AGENCY

LEAH H. JALANDONI
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

MARILOU P. CATAPUSAN
ROXL-RIKUMAHAN AGENCY

ANNA LIZA M. LIMAAD
PAGADIAN-TABALA AGENCY

ISMAEL L. MILLENDRES, JR., RFC
MILLENDRES ASSOCIATES

IGNACIO S. AGUINO
ANTONIO ASSOCIATES

JED ARVIN C. MENES
MERTEL ASSOCIATES

IMELDA Y. VERGEL DE DIOS
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

MICHAEL JARS C. CRUZ
ARDSON ASSOCIATES

MINERVA N. VENTURA
N. SILO ASSOCIATES

LARRY F. CLETO, TLM, RFC
MCDAD ASSOCIATES

CELEDONIA S. TEMISM
BATMISAN-MALIGALIG AGENCY

ERIC YABCO
MONTEVERDE ASSOCIATES

REGIEL P. MORALES
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

VENUS S. MADRID
NORTH LUZON AGENCY

MARIEL DIN R. KAMID
RAMOS ASSOCIATES

JINA PERPETUA S. ADVANIC
CAPILI ASSOCIATES

MILAGROS C. DELA PAZ
CELLADO ASSOCIATES

REZCIEL P. CAGBABOOR
BERNARDO ASSOCIATES

EDUARDO A. FORDAN
FORDAN ASSOCIATES

KARMINA TOSCA D. FERIA
TRINIDAD FINANCIAL ADVISERS

ALLAN S. SACLA
LA TRINIDAD-FLORES AGENCY

URBECIA R. CASTAÑARES
DY ASSOCIATES

HENITA O. AYON, RFC
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

CRISTINA C. GUTIERREZ
MENDOZA ASSOCIATES

MA. VIVIEN L. DIAMEN
EDDI-EDMA AGENCY

ARNEL N. SAPAD
TARLAC-AGUINO AGENCY

DANILO N. SY
MONTIEL ASSOCIATES

DAVID B. LAY, JR.
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

No photo: BENITO T. ROQUE, Del Monte Associates, MDRT 1 Year Qualifying Member, Chairman's Award

MESSAGE
from Mr. Reynaldo Centeno

Warm congratulations to all honorees of the 2011 Agency Awards! Your accomplishments last year once again prove your excellence and dedication to your chosen career. As we embark on our goal of being the premier life insurance provider in the Philippines, Philam Life promises to launch more innovative products that address the needs of our market and to provide better and more choices of service delivery to our clients nationwide. With our continued partnership, our clients and the Filipino families can expect more from you, their trusted agent, and from Philam Life.

Once again congratulations and I wish you continued success!

REYNALDO CENTENO
SEVP & Chief Operating Officer

INTERNATIONAL Awardees

MA. ASUNCION P. BALILI
CDO-ILIGAN-BUKIDNON DIRECT

ERNESTO O. ANGELES
IGAN ASSOCIATES

VANESSA MARIE G. LEGASPI
SALDIVITO-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

JUNE R. NERY
ANTONG ASSOCIATES

VIRGINIA W. GO
LZ ROQUE ASSOCIATES

YOLANDA E. YAP
CENTRAL LUZON DIRECT

RACHELLE FATIMA M. COBIA
MATAMOAN-COBIA AGENCY

CHAN SIU ENG
TAN ASSOCIATES

IRENE B. VILLENA
CANTE NORTH DIRECT

PRISCILLA P. TUGANO
BAPLALA ASSOCIATES

NATIONAL Awardees

Philam Life's outstanding Agents and and Agency Leaders who met the production and quality business requirements for Performance Year 2010.

Founder's Circle, Chairman's Board, President's Circle, Activity Masters Platinum, Accident and Health, and Group and Credit Insurance

GENE R. MATLOD
CEBU SM GAYATAN AGENCY

FELISA S. PINEDA
TARLAC-AQUINO AGENCY

JOSEPH T. MANGADAP
BAPLALA ASSOCIATES

EDITHA C. BAPLALA
BAPLALA ASSOCIATES

CAROLINA L. MAGBIRO
ANTONG ASSOCIATES

PERLINA C. BAYLON
HI-MATA AGENCY

RUBY A. LAUD
DAVAO-EVANGELISTA AGENCY

CORNELIO G. MORENO, JR.
ANTONG ASSOCIATES

DANDE B. MACARINGS
BAPLALA ASSOCIATES

WILMA D. DAO-AYAN
BAGUIO-DUMAYAS AGENCY

SYLVIA S. JOSEPH
BAPLALA ASSOCIATES

MERCEDES K. LIM
CEBU-BAYUG AGENCY

AFRICADA S. MIGGOT
PAGADIAN-TANALA AGENCY

CATHERINE C. CARINGAL
ANTONO ASSOCIATES

EDITH J. PRADO
DAVAO-EVANGELISTA AGENCY

ANNIS S. CAPULLA
ANTONG ASSOCIATES

MESSAGE from Mr. Ariel Cantos

Congratulations dear awardees for your outstanding performance in 2010. Your achievement is truly remarkable and distinguishes you as the best among the best. It is with great pride and honor that I present you to our executives and to your fellow awardees. Today, we honor you for your determination to succeed in the life insurance profession and provide service to the Filipino people. May you continue to be at the forefront of our continuing quest to be the premier agency and the undisputed leader in the industry!

Again, my warmest congratulations to all of the awardees!

ARIEL CANTOS
SVP & Chief Agency Officer

NATIONAL AWARDS
Unit Manager Category

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ, RFC
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

ANNA CONCEPCION C. BLANCO
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

ISMAEL L. MELENDRES, JR., RFC
MELENDRES ASSOCIATES

CECILIA G. MELENDRES, RFC
MELENDRES ASSOCIATES

KARLO A. MORTEL
MORTEL ASSOCIATES

REYNOLD K. GAN
KGAN ASSOCIATES

GREGORIO V. TONGKO
STO. DOMINGO ASSOCIATES

EDGAR M. BUMAYAS
BADUO-BUMAYAS AGENCY

SEGUNDINA O. TAN
TAN ASSOCIATES

NATIONAL AWARDS
Agency Category

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ, RFC
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

PABLO D. TAMALA
PAGADIAN TAMALA AGENCY

ALFONSO D. JEREZ
CATABATO-JEREZ AGENCY

BADIANI F. ANTONIO
ANTONIO ASSOCIATES

JOSEFINO R. STO. DOMINGO, FLMI
STO. DOMINGO ASSOCIATES

HENRY L. EVANGELISTA
DAVID-EVANGELISTA AGENCY

SECTORAL & REGIONAL Awards

Philam Life's Agents and Agency Leaders who met the Company's standards in first year production, consistent activity, persistency, recruitment, and growth.

Sales Excellence Awards

ANTONIO P. GADRUJA
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

JULIE P. MIRANDA
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

ABRAHAM B. SILVA
BERNARDO-CORRA AGENCY

MANDY R. BAUTISTA-ESPIRITU
ESPIRITU ASSOCIATES

PERLITA O. CHIAPPY
ARGOSA ASSOCIATES

JOSSETTE P. SOLANO
MAURICIO SOLANO AGENCY

CHARITO H. AZARIAH
DAVID-AZARIAH AGENCY

MA. ROSARIO F. LUMANLAN
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

ERIC D. HIZOLE
HIZOLE ASSOCIATES

LINDA GRACE B. AREVALO
DAVID-EVANGELISTA AGENCY

FLORA G. ARELLANO
BERNARDO-CORRA AGENCY

EVELYN S. MENDOZA
MATIAS ASSOCIATES

ROSEMARIE L. BALAJADIA
LATUNA-SILVA AGENCY

CECILIA U. BARRIENTOS
MATIAS ASSOCIATES

JOSE M. SANTIAGO
BALAJADIA-VILLANUEVA AGENCY

MARICRISTA S. ZULETA
MARTIN ASSOCIATES

EDNA J. PAMBIDI
STO. DOMINGO ASSOCIATES

NANETTE C. CUNANAN
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

RUBY C. NONGGA
NEGRA ASSOCIATES

BYRNA S. DE VERA
MANALILI-ASSOCIATES

NINA PILAR S. DE JESUS
LUCILLA-MINA AGENCY

MADARIA S. SUAREZ
ARAGON ASSOCIATES

EMELITA S. ABANTE
MATIAS ASSOCIATES

ROMERICK M. POLO
MATIAS ASSOCIATES

EDWIN A. GERPAL
BUCACHACHO-REGINO AGENCY

TARA A. IRVIN
ESTABILLO-LOPEZ AGENCY

PETRONILA S. SADARAN
MARTIN-SADARAN

LILIAN S. SULLANO
MATIAS ASSOCIATES

LUZ S. SEBASTIAN
NEGRA ASSOCIATES

SHERYL S. SERRANO
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

RAPHAEL T. IGNACIO
LAGUNA-AVILLA AGENCY

MARY GRACE L. SILVA
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

MAY ANN N. PALAD
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

KARL CAESAR B. BAYLON
BAYLON AGENCY

Tamaraw Qualifiers

Tamaraw Club

EMMANUEL S. BOLTRAN
BOLTRAN ASSOCIATES

PABLO M. MILLAR JR.
MILLAR ASSOCIATES

CAROLINE I. CANIS
NOEL-CLETA-CANIS

MA. VICTORIA P. LIMAC
MARTEL ASSOCIATES

LAWRENCE M. PERFECTO
ANTONIO ASSOCIATES

ROSALINDA V. LIM
MARTEL ASSOCIATES

MA. CHRISTINA E. TUBALLA
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

AMELIA S. YAP
CEO-CUNANAN-BORCIA DIRECT

ELOFUCHE S. ATKIN
BAYLON-PH DIRECT

Tamaraw Council

Unit

NILDA C. ST.
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

ANITA C. YU
YU ASSOCIATES

ROMATO S. PEREZ
SALIENTES-GONZALEZ ASSOCIATES

SEGUNDINA O. TAN
TAN ASSOCIATES

MA. LEONOR O. OLARIOCA
PH ASSOCIATES

VENUS S. BADINO
KGAN-LEON DIRECT

INMACULATA P. JABILLANI
FINANCIAL FINANCIAL ADVISERS

VENANCIO C. FRANCISCO
MANCES ASSOCIATES

EDEN L. VALDILEZ
DEL MUNDO ASSOCIATES

MA. ELENA A. ESPINADA
DELLOSA ASSOCIATES

NILO B. MATUBOG
OBIA-MA SANTOS AGENCY

PERLINA C. BAYLON
BAYLON AGENCY

Agency

ISMAEL L. MELENDRES, JR., RFC
MELENDRES ASSOCIATES

CECILIA A. MELENDRES, RFC
MELENDRES ASSOCIATES

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Left to right: Manuel Vergel De Dios, Araneli Cadenas, Judith Mendoza, Remedios Ilgo, Leah Jelandoni, Anna Concepcion Blanco, Renato Perez, Lourdes Olivia, Ludivina Cordero, Ma. Anunciacion Gregorgon, Ma. Rosario Lumeram

Front row left to right: Ma. Teresa Hernandez, Lu Jalandoni, Antonina Balcinon
Back row left to right: Ringo Morales, Remigio Perez, Jr., Imelda Vergel De Dios, Aurea Jocson, Edmar Cando, Thelesfes Pangan

Front row left to right: Eva Maria Galvez, Nenita Ayon,
Back row left to right: Rommel Tibili, David Lay Jr., Julie Miranda, Ronelle Climaco,
Sheryl Serrano, Antonio Gaerlan, Vanessa Marie Lagasca

Rosario C. Salientes

PHILAM LIFE

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Contributing Editors Jenni Epperson and Rita Francisco Prieto

'If you talk of heavy platforms or pointy shoes, we're not gonna be there'

Theirs is an idea born after a NYC transport strike. The CEO of the No. 1 selling footwear at Rustan's explains why and how they build shoes 'from the bottom up'

By Cherie V. Mont

AEROSOLES PRESIDENT and chief executive Jules Schneider feigned hurt feeling when a compliment is paid to one of the shoe styles on a makeshift display shelf just behind him.

"You sound so surprised," he said.

It was a two-tone, tassled roleplay on hard, crunchy retro style that not many men would be caught dead in.

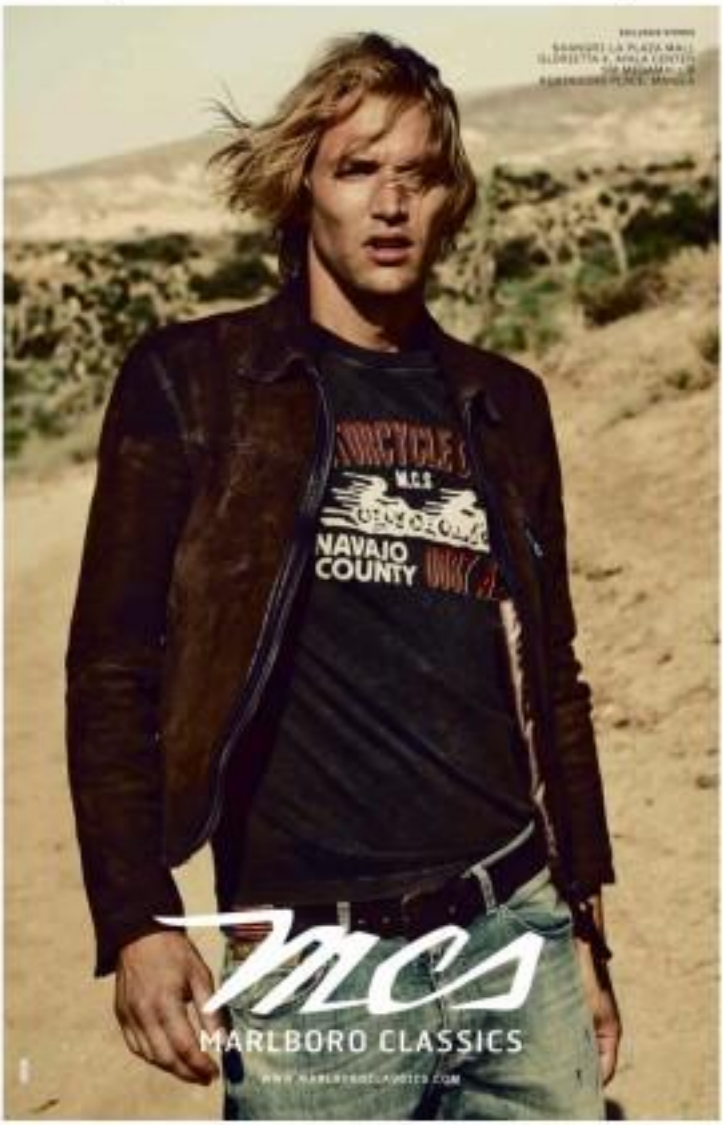
There again Schneider, who was in Manila recently unveiled Aerosoles is not a fashion line. "Our we're a fashionable line," he stressed.

The basic concept for the brand, after all, wasn't to be a fashion trendsetter, but to do ergo-comfortable shoes.

Years ago, Schneider was executive vice president at Kenneth Cole—he had also been vice president at Fisher Camuto, now the Nine West Group—in charge of a division that was developing a line that mirrors the comfort of sneakers in casual footwear.

The shoe executive is from New York "where people walk, and we wanted some

IF YOU'D



SEVENTH High's dynamic duo, Lito Trinidad and Jessi Hamazaki

GEMENA Cruz does a sexy number at the Lounge.

TWINNY Lagtananc, Gerry Valenciano and Angeli Pangilinan-Valenciano

VANESSA Figueroa, Sophie Bastisell and Farah Salvador

HUNKS Shirtless spinning for the crowd

SEXY Ejercito

JERIC Gonzalez and Mina Estrada

JANEE Hoogkamer and Rissa Escobar

MICHELLE Sison and Arnold Pegalilo

LAUREEN Uy and Carla Humphries

A new high in night-clubbing dawns

NICOLE Bautz, Nokia product manager Mike Smith and Manny de los Reyes

ELIJAH Mendiola, Lamar Reyes and Rica Cacanindin

EDD Fuentes and Philip De Ungkang

SUPPRT Manila editorial director Marta Nino Wisniewski

SET 23 becomes one of the hottest night spots, dubbings, is simply called Seventh High, right smack in Bonifacio High Street and 7th Avenue. Opening night had me rushing there before the media and I was in it.

I was so wrong, for the most I noticed, as I entered, was the lack of media. Apparently, the editorial decision to ban the media from the club's opening night was made by the club's owner, Ivan Lanuevo, who was also the one who had the idea of putting out on the sidewalk in front of the club. Aptly sponsored by Nokia, the club's opening night was a who's who of the country's young and beautiful, with the help of the front door man, I eventually got early to the first floor of the three-story building whose boutique interiors are the product of the collaboration between architect Randolf Lim (and me) and the talented interior designer Theodora Jacinto.

The duo designed the interiors allowing for varied entertainment to suit your own style, a new concept patterned after the elite clubs in other Asian cities. "It promises to be at par with the world's swankiest hangouts," the duo said.

At the exclusive Club Room on the third floor, there was an unforgettable bash which lasted literally till almost daylight. DJ Jamz opened it up for Manila's hottest swooning starts, a duo called Discotech, inspired just for the occasion spinning dubbings.

While the super-chilled champagne and cocktails flowed all night till daybreak, one couldn't miss seeing hot namedroppables such as Rep. Toby Tiangco, at setting party girl Sophie Bastisell, fashionable Laureen Uy, Philippine Tatler's Nina Estrada, cutey Vanessa Figueroa, TV's hip and fab Bodi Ambrader, shutterbug Mike Jacob and wife, adorable Carmina Asuncion, and talent manager Arnold Vegafria.

It was a dazzling happening, something dazzling, dramatic and dazzling.

Check out forecasts High, and see what all the excitement is about, dubbings.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Mauricio Arreche

Photos by Alex Van Hagen
sponsored by PAUL MARC LENSES

Nokia rocks

"A million downs and pass on the back for Nokia, the world's No. 1 mobile phone brand!"

This was what most of us had in mind when Nokia threw a bash after it surpassed the awesome one million monthly downloads hard track in the country for its sleek Ovi Store, exclusively for Nokia device owners.

The happening took place at the posh factory "E" Lounge in Makati, with Nokia top executives welcoming the guests. The execs were led by Nokia's senior services marketing manager Manuel Manrique; device portfolio manager Mike Smith; marketing managers Jessica Peña and Hillevie Baes; and corporate communications manager Nikka Abes.

Aptly the ever-serene touch menu, which is Lounge is renowned for, Manrique took the mic and explained: "The success of our Ovi Store can be attributed to the users providing more choices for applications, themes and games for a download lasting 30mps. Games are the popular World Song to beat it as an ample that has gained a lot of traction in cell in Asian countries as well.

Nokia has once again proved that it remains to be the world's No. 1 mobile phone brand, committed to consistent user innovation, services to enable users."

KAREN Pastrana and Benny Javier

LUCIO Pua of Premiere Wines and Tessa Dragon

Nokia updates were given by Nikka Abes: "Apart from its success in the country, Ovi Store is also a smashing hit abroad," she said. "Check out China, Abes, the Ovi Store is the preferred download channel by majority of the population. While Ovi Store achieves more and more downloads from around the world, generating around four million downloads per day."

At the end, all the revelers enjoyed the free apps from Ovi. The downloading members also savored for some lucky few the latest new phones from Nokia, the were Nokia E5 fourth and Pipe and Nokia C2.

One thing was clear, dubbings, Nokia, through the Ovi Store, made sure loyal Nokia users don't get left behind in the "apps race."

Start downloading now! Check out www.store.ovi.com.

Mandarin Oriental treat

World-class Mandarin Oriental Manila gave us a truly awesome treat at its luxurious and elegantly decorated Dusit restaurant.

Mandarin Oriental GM Mark Bradford welcomed the guests and royally wowed them to an exceptional dinner of, check this out: Salmon Tartar, Chive Crème and Smoked Salmon Toast, the excellent Nicoise salad & Caviar, Sea Bass, Nicoise Ratatouille and Sauce Chorizo, Champagne Sorbet, scrumptious Lemon Curd Cheese Cake, Artichoke Bruschetta and Damiana Dashboot, and the multi-red totally colorful dessert bottle brilliantly crafted by topnotch French executive sous-chef Remi Gruvelle, ou-la-la.

All dishes were doomed by overflowing premium blues of Chandon Champagne, courtesy of Olga Asuncion, naturellement.

Guests were given a dash of highbrow entertainment through the incredible musical performances of world-class baritone tenor Jack Sobel and multi-awarded performer Stephanie Reese.

The performances were the perfect finale for a night of great company, excellent food and entertainment, which is sooo like Mandarin Oriental! It was the hotel's way of saying "thank you!" to their special clients and friends, dubbings.

MANDARIN Oriental Manila GM Mark Bradford, Chartaca Chaidee, Jewlles president Noelle Rebaza and Johnny Litton

MEDIA marketing manager Jessica Peña, senior services marketing manager Rhonel Marcajas, marketing manager Hilaire Rosal and corporate communications manager Nikka Abes

KONAMICI Paper Corp. president and COO Connie Han, Lavage Phils. Inc. president Winnie Go and CATS Motors' Grace Ang

STEPHANIE Reese Sandoval by Society Lounge general manager and dad Patrice Poussion and Jean Chuchua

SEA Wind's Q and Joelert Cecilio with Adecco president and CEO Jon Lagman

CATS Motors president Felix Ang and wife Grace Martin Gan and husband, Advanced Overcomputation Center founder and president Dr. Eisma Mark Gan

LEN Amadora and Art Sumodoy

TEDDY and Janice Dans

JOANNE and Maestro Concepcion, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam Haliouh Mallo Haji Yussuf and Chinatrust Philippines vice chair Bill Go

HILLEVIE GM Patrick Chan, Damian Baytan, Transnational Diversified Group founder and chair Bobbit Bolgado, and Dusit Thani Manila GM Prabodh Bansal

HOGEN designer Noel Fernando and corporate affairs director Zaldeth Co with Angela honorary consul Helen Ong and Diners Ms Chan

'If you talk of heavy platforms or pointy shoes, we're not gonna be there'

From page 1

thing that can be comfortable all day."

The idea was hammered after the city experienced a transport strike, and everyone had to walk in sneakers to get around comfortably.

Working with the local designers in Iloilo, he wanted to expand on the idea. "But, Ben (Cielo), at that point, wanted junior (styles), new new, new. We felt we had something and we wanted to put more development in. So we decided to buy the division."

In 1997, Schneider developed the idea for Aerosoles, which sent to "build shoes from the bottom up," using soles that flex and bend, "microbottom," as he called them, made of lightweight, molel-injected materials called TR (thermo rubber), TPR (thermo plastic rubber), EVC (pulverized chlorides) that cushions the foot. The soles are supercritically padded so the forefoot (ball) to distributh shock.

NILES Schneider, CEO and president, developed the idea for Aerosoles in 1987, which was to "build shoes from the bottom up," using soles that flex and bend, and lightweight, molel-injected materials.

"TECHNOLOGY has become a buzzword," says Karen Sadek, SVP for merchandising. "For Aerosoles, all the customer needs to do is put the shoes on to feel the difference."

AT NUSTAR'S, sandals are constant favorites. Counterclockwise from top: Gloria Soul booties, Bravado sandal, and Cream Soda oxfords.

Buzzword

"When you're able to build the comfort in, you can build the fashion in as well. We're able to do more products and not have the comfort," he said.

To expand into heels and wedge styles, the lasts are made in such a way that some of the pressure is transferred to the heel, lessening the weight on the ball of the foot. Even new in its 24th year, the styles have kept the waffled bottom (soles) and extra cushion on the forefoot, Schneider noted.

"For some, comfort has become a buzzword," he said. "It's our calypso, for them it's a marketing tool."

"Technology has also become a buzzword," added Karen Sadek, SVP for merchandising. "They may say they put those 'flubbidys' or whatever we make. Or may for technology. But when you put the shoes on, you don't feel the comfort. But for Aerosoles, all the customer needs to do is put the shoes on to feel the difference."

AEROSOLES' freestanding boutiques have younger customers, especially after the brand began offering trendier styles in recent years. Above, sandal Quiltee Amber.

THE LASTS are made in such a way that some of the pressure is transferred to the heel, lessening the weight on the ball of the foot. Above, Fauvidan slingback sandal.

Double-digit growth

Nustar's shoppers seem to agree as the brand is the No. 1 selling women's footwear in the department store, according to Stores Specialists Inc. merchandise manager Evelyn C. Go. SSI, Nustar's sister company, exclusively distributes the brand.

At Nustar's, its best customer are older women, with sandals as constant favorites. The nine freestanding boutiques, however, tend to have younger customers, she added, especially after the brand began offering trendier styles in recent years.

Aerosoles had double-digit growth here the past years and SSI will open five more shops, according to Schneider. Data a few remaining US retailers had a hard time getting his idea when he started it in 1987.

"We've never gonna be the first to turn of style," Sadek said. "But we want to offer fashionable footwear, so we combine comfort and fashion, and be trend-right with contemporary styles."

In his experience developing the brand, Schneider said you can make stilettos more comfortable... but only up to a certain point. Squishing one's toes in a space too narrow for them just has its limitations.

"If you talk of heavy platforms or pointy shoes, we're not gonna be there," Schneider said.

"We're comfy but we're not gonna be the leading edge. We're going for that woman who gets out of school and runs errands career footwear. But that's still pretty young so, we try to make it a little more contemporary. We offer her good value. You know, it's important so never give up on what you stand for."

Year-long must-see events celebrate Italy's 150th unification anniversary

THE 150TH anniversary of Italy's unification will be celebrated worldwide. In the Philippines, the celebration starts on March 18 with the seventh concert series of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra presented by CCP, with the Embassy of Italy, Bonifacio and the Philippine Italian Association, to be held tonight, at CCP Main Theater.

The PPO, conducted by music director and principal conductor Olivier Ochanine, will lightly perform the overture to "Nabucco," which contains the very famous "Va pensiero" (Flying Dutchman) — "Requiem."

"Nabucco" is considered the soundtrack of the Italian Risorgimento (means resurrection).

Spanish exhibit

The Correspondents in the Spanish Civil War," a collection of 150 original and facsimile of wartime newspapers and photographs that document the lives of correspondents in Spain during the Civil War (1936-1939) is on view until March 25 at the Instituto Cervantes de Manila, 858 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Featured are works by Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Entrance is free. Call 526-1482 or visit http://manila.cervantes.es.

Whole new charmed world of do-it-yourself jewelry

Danish jewelry brand Pandora comes to the Philippines

By Irene C. Perez

CHARM BRACELETS are hardly worn by men, but for Pandora manager Anders Peter Juel Sauerberg, the one around his wrist isn't just a chic accessory—it's a reminder of his 18-month-old son Carl August.

His bracelet is made of woven black leather with the trademark Pandora clasp. It holds three silver charms: a bag, a teddy bear and a Buddha.

"The bag is for my son who is in Singapore," Sauerberg said. "Instead of a photograph, I carry this as an image" of his other favorite house. The teddy bear is his favorite toy, and the Buddha reminds me of peace."

His bracelet is from the Moments collection of Pandora, a Danish brand of high-end jewelry that has been around for almost 10 years and is available in 60 countries. Moments, a 10-year old do-it-yourself charm bracelet line, is the most here bestseller.

Over at the Pandora fan page in Facebook, women, mostly from the US, UK and Australia, gush about their newest charms. Terry Tucker from Tasmania writes: "It's nice to treat yourself on payday when you can as we all work hard." Some of the jewelry were gifts by their spouses, loved ones or friends, they said online.

The online community allows collectors to post pictures and scores of their bracelets, share tips on how to clean or fix them, compare prices and scores. Several members show hours of "retired" charms, carefully stored in glass-top cases with individual compartments.

Candy-colored glass, diamonds

Pandora pieces are hand-finished and made with craftsmanship, quality and exclusivity in mind.

The Danish Sauerberg, managing director of Mathesar Group, which handles Pandora in the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong, was recently in the country to launch the first Philippine-based store-level store on the second floor of Greenbelt 1 in Makati. Luxury house Lucenzo is the Philippine distributor.

Sauerberg explained how the Moments do-it-yourself bracelet works: First you choose your setting, it may be braided leather, waxed cotton, fabric or metal, in silver or 14-karat gold. Then you pick the charms—silver, two-tone or gold, with sterling-colored Murano glass, enamel, precious stones, wood. The more expensive pricey...ones have real pearls and diamonds.

The charms can be locked in place with clips and "spacers" that also prevent it from rubbing which may cause damage.

Finally, it makes use of a unique "screwlock" technology that secures the charms and prevents them from falling off even if the bracelet snaps.

Queen bee, cupcake, puppy charm

It's easy to get lost in choosing...there are around 300 charms and 15 designs are added every year by the seasons, one for spring-summer and another for fall-winter.

The charms represent all that is special...milestones such as birthdays and weddings (hearts, crown, baby carriage); people (football, soccer ball, angel); nature (ocean wave, seahorse, suitcase, flowers, snowman); pets and animals (puppy, kangaroo, giraffe, hippo, octopus); books; fashion (stiletto, sneakers, purse); food (pineapple, cupcake); even causes (pink ribbon for breast cancer awareness). You can even have a picture, quote line or pin your symbol.

"You tell a story through your bracelet," Sauerberg said. "It's a conversation piece that can be worn by women of any age. The grandmother's silver get the gold, the young ones, silver, and kids wear leather which is available in pink."

Since it is real jewelry it can be passed on as heirloom pieces. Artisan buy designs associated with animal signs (the rabbit is a hit this year), zodiac signs, birthstones and initials. Items purchased come with a care card, and Pandora offers free cleaning in the shop.

Lucenzo managing director Ramon Tee said a "starter kit" costs around P10,000. The antique (in P15,000 (without bold) to P22,000), while the simple charms start at P1,950. The regular gold ones with charms can be had for P11,000 each. Not all charm designs are available in the Makati store, but can be ordered from the main branch in Singapore.

Artisan jewelry

Pandora was founded in 1982 by Per Enevoldsen and wife Winnie in a small shop store in Copenhagen. Over 60 million pieces of jewelry are sold every year, and as the demand grew, they transformed production to Thailand.

By 2000, designers Isaac Pandora and Lisbeth Eng Larsen had come up with Moments. In 2008, the Lucenzo four collection, made of 18 karat yellow, white or rose gold, was released.

STACKABLE Ring Upon Rings in sandy colored gems

FASHION Pandora Facebook page says, "These jewelry should never be a fashion. These charms are adds for"

PAVÉ bracelet in gold, sterling silver, Murano glass charms and rubber chain

CHARM bracelets from Moments Collection

CHARMS variously gold, silver, two-tone, Murano glass, semi-precious stones, semi-pearls and diamonds

5 Condo Must-Haves

- Free-flowing air and sunlight
- Fewer units per floor
- Sensible amenities
- Emergency power even inside your unit
- Easy payment terms

LIPSTICKS for my collection

Emma Watson is new Lancôme ambassadress

LANCÔME is pleased to announce the appointment of actress Emma Watson as the new ambassadress of Lancôme.

"Thanks to her charm, sensuousness and incredible exuberance, Emma Watson has become the icon of her generation. We are delighted by this new collaboration with Emma, who brings a fresh spirit to Lancôme," says Youcef Nabi, president of Lancôme International.

MAC teams up with Wonder Woman

Its new collection arriving this week has superhero proportions

By Pam Pastor

HOLLYWOOD HAS chosen a new Wonder Woman.

Adrianne Palicki ("Friday Night Lights," "Supernatural") will soon be flying high in David E. Kelley's "Wonder Woman," and known Wonder Woman Lynda Carter approves.

A lot has been said about the TV show casting... Adrianne Innovation! I'm sure the pilot, Wonder Woman fans who don't think she's right for the role at all...

But you don't have to be Adrianne Palicki or Lynda Carter to feel like Wonder Woman. MAC has teamed up with Wonder Woman to come out with a special

LIPSTICKS, Marquise d'Versina, Russian Red, Spitfire

MAC xWonder Woman Collection

Spring 2011 collection inspired by the sexy superhero.

The packaging and the collection's colors are fun and bold...perfect for the collection's comic book theme. And because Wonder Woman is larger than life, some MAC products have grown in size.

Lipglass shades in the collection are bigger than you're used, and Powder Blush and Pressblender Eye Liner have giant heads.

MAC considered its drop in Soho New York-based comic book store to launch the collection. MAC also launched a flash game online, urging fans of the collection to keep track of where Wonder Woman is. If they're lucky enough to live near one of the participating stores, they can get Wonder Woman-themed...and possibly a limited edition...

MAC Wonder Woman Bow mug... if they check into a store Wonder Woman is currently visiting.

In the Philippines, MAC x Wonder Woman Collection will be available next week. Retail events will be held in different MAC stores to celebrate the arrival.

MEDITTA Lipbrushes and Amazon Woman blush duo

Hot list

As early as now, MAC and Wonder Woman fans are planning to make sure they get their hands on the products they have been waiting for.

Top on their lists are Mighty Splendor and Amazon Princess blush duos, the lipsticks, the cremesheen lipglasses, the 12pc. lash colors and the Glory Me and Spirit of Truth naillacquers.

If you want to bring home your favorites from the collection, visit your favorite MAC store or counter on the date of release – March 17 in Glorietta, March 25 in Trinoma, March 31 at Marquee Mall, March 31 at Shangri-La Edsa Mall and March 31 at Enchanted.

Stores open at 10 a.m. and there will be makeup demonstrations at 2 p.m.

BRIGHT Turkish and Marine Blue pigments

With quality that is sure to last, an Avida home is a must-have. Visit our showroom today or call 848-5200.

Right for your budget, right for you.

Avida Towers

Alabang, Sucat, San Lazaro, Makati West, San Lorenzo, Bonifacio Global City, Centera, New Manila, Cebu

www.avidaland.com

5 Must-Haves for Condo Dwellers

Most condo buyers, especially first-time buyers, tend to overlook the simplest but most important details that will later affect the quality of their life in the city. When choosing a new home, consider the essentials and choose the condo that's right for you.

Free-flowing air and sunlight

It's free. It's found everywhere. But why are most condo dwellers deprived of this basic human need? Research shows that there is a higher risk of depression, osteoporosis, even an increased risk of cancer among people who live in cosmopolitan areas – this is attributed to the lack of vitamin D, which is obtained from exposure to sunlight. True enough, city people spend most of their waking hours inside air-conditioned offices, then go straight to their enclosed condominium homes, rarely seeing the light of day.

Units at Avida Towers are naturally-illuminated and well-ventilated, assuring residents that their well-being comes first.

The horizontal orientation of Avida units allow air and sunlight to circulate freely. Most living spaces have windows or you also save on electricity by not having to switch on the lights during the day.

Fewer units per floor

Imagine what it's like living in an 800-unit building that has about 40 units per floor. On their way to work, everyone will be queuing up for the elevators and hurrying through the lobby in the morning rush. They're already stressed even before they get to the office. Is this something you'd like to experience everyday?

Avida Towers has fewer units per floor and more space for you to move around because you share common areas with lesser people. You can leisurely walk to the elevators, wait around the lobby, or spend as much time as you want in the pool or pocket gardens without feeling rushed. At Avida, we value your personal space as much as you do.

For Josefito N. Luna, Ayala Land's Chief Architect and Group Head of the Innovation and Design Group, the task is always to come up with designs that surprise and delight through thoughtful anticipation. "We have a role in ensuring that residential units and common areas conform to the way people interact and live on a day-to-day basis. In essence, we design knowing that we influence lives."

TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN

Keeping to an average of only 24 units per floor, Avida provides its residents more privacy and a sense of exclusivity.

Sensible amenities

Many condo buyers look for luxuries first, necessities second. Remember that choosing a condominium is no different from deciding on a house you pay for all the extras. Would you be willing to pay extra on your monthly dues and maintenance costs for the upkeep of that Olympic-sized pool? The wise condo buyer will always opt for the property with amenities that will suit his daily needs.

Every Avida Towers project undergoes meticulous planning in what amenities to offer, the efficient size needed to cater to the entire community, and more importantly, how those services and facilities can be operationally and efficiently sustained without burdening the condo owners with unnecessary fees.

"All Avida Towers' features and amenities are a result of careful planning and utmost consideration of what the market wants and what they really need. We build our facilities knowing that our customers deserve nothing less than the perfect mix of quality and affordability," explains Avida Towers Project Head Dez Cruz. "Avida also protects the customer's investment with strong property management that keeps the units and amenities in top shape."

Emergency power even inside your unit

Emergency measures during power outages are necessary to immediately address residents' basic needs. Standby power is instantaneously made available inside and outside each unit so as not to disrupt their normal routine.

Other developments only have enough power to keep the lights and common facilities running. Avida Towers provides electricity not only to keep all elevators and common facilities working, but also to let you keep your TV, electric fan and refrigerator simultaneously on. At Avida, you won't be left in the dark.

Easy payment terms

Paying for your dream condo shouldn't compromise your lifestyle. Avida now lets you afford your own pad without giving up the little perks that make your day – having lunch-outs and dinner dates with friends, enjoying your love for shopping or going out with the family. Now, you can afford your very own unit through Avida's easy payment terms. Downpayments can be paid over a 24-month period. So, for as low as P9,800 a month, it can fit easily into your budget.

There are a number of condo units sold at attractive prices with seemingly exciting amenities and features. But the low-priced condo or the grand amenities may not be all that it appears to be. The discerning condo-hunter chooses a unit that is both practical and carefully-designed, a home that fits his needs now and over the long-term. With quality that is sure to last, an Avida home is a must have. So when choosing a condo unit, buy one that is not only right for your budget, but right for you.

For more details about the quality of life we offer at Avida, visit our showroom or call 848-5200.

Right for your budget, right for you.

Avida Towers

Alabang, Sucat, San Lazaro, Makati West, San Lorenzo, Bonifacio Global City, Cardona, Nasa Manila, Cebu.

www.avidaland.com

She's sewing her way to a better life

By Joy Rojas
Core Beauty

IT HELPS that through her 52 years, life has dealt Marina Espera one blow after another.

Widowed 20 years ago after her husband, then drunk, fell into a river and drowned, she was left to raise their four children on her own—an enormous task for the sewer who was paid off and let go by the company whom she worked for 13 years.

Living in the slums of Meycauayan, Bulacan, she's only one of countless families who supply glove makers with thousands of discarded leather from nearby factories. "Bumili ng bigas," says the tiny and weary Espera with a timid smile of where the little money she earns for her efforts go. "Nakakatawa nanaw."

Terrain-tolerant

But in the dark and cramped space she, her children, and four grandchildren call home, hope for a better life comes in the form of a second-hand electric sewing machine, a contraption she hopes in her coveralls behind: for fuel that her infirm-to-hated floor would cave in from its weight.

The sewing machine, a loaner from the Bulacan-based NGO Kaibhan, Inc., helps Espera assemble eco-friendly tarpaulin totes as well as canvas kits that unfold into practical bags.

Three years ago, Espera's luck changed when her fiancée Nelly introduced her to Margie Galit, Kaibhan, Inc.'s executive director and a businesswoman. "I heard that she was selling denim wallets in Divisoria, and that her son-in-law had left his daughter, so there was nobody helping her," recalls Galit.

Kaibhan, Inc., whose causes include addressing maternal mortality through a basic emergency obstetric care facility, and educating teens on reproductive health and sexuality via a Youth Hub e-library also empowers individuals through its various livelihood projects.

Projects from the communities of Cebuang, Mabalong Dalandanan, and Malapalay Laja in Valenzuela, Bulacan, have honed work and income from making bed and home linens, aprons, and in the case of Espera, tarpaulin bags.

Tarpaulin, says Espera, isn't easy to sew.

Through the Bulacan-based NGO Kaibhan, Inc., Marina Espera finds much-needed work and income making tarpaulin and foldable bags

She doesn't know how many machines (the she's broken, and she discovered that calling the Lupin makes sewing easier, but...

Still, she manages to meet Galit's orders, churning out bag after bag from six in the morning till well into the night.

"One thing she can do is cut the tarp well, especially if it comes with a design," observes Galit. "Matitino kasi ikod-mo, at," she chides Espera, who smiles self-consciously. "Not the cut kind."

Meanwhile, sisters for the complicated foldable bag she cut by hand, and put together by Espera. "Every bag style brings a new experience, so don't say no," she tells Espera in Tagalog. "Mas dami pa rin counter (mother) bag like it, you know what to do."

Special offer

If anything, Espera appears to be gaining confidence: on her own, she's accepted orders to sew the bags for "special offer" close to close sales people.

Galit and Espera's biggest frustration about the tarpaulin bags (which the shopping mall Market Market gives away as promotional item) is that orders come and go. If they were consistent, Espera would not only have more opportunity to master the skill, she would also augment her meager income.

Ingredients for a simple bunot-cooked meal are what she's been able to afford from the money she makes from the tarpaulin and foldable bags. "Mahirapna, sadhan ng kanin, sabi," interrupts the mother of four unemployed children when asked what she spends her earnings on.

They're for ongong merienda, a dish she hopes will help her daughter recover leaner than the tuberculosis she was diagnosed with months before.

Life may not have been fair to Espera, but she hasn't stopped dreaming of the day when all her years of hard work finally pay off. "Bago ako matanda, sana matuwa ko ng marami ang mga anak ko," she says. "Sana mabigyan ko sila ng pagkakataon." (Before I go, I'd like to provide for my children, I'd like to give them a livelihood.)

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GIFTS and Green bag

Visit the following venues and dates: *SM Southmall* (until today), *SM Megamall* (March 19-20), and *SM North Edsa* (March 26-April 3).

Free shows by Madz

THE PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers (Madz) will have free shows March 20 and 27 at High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Choir master Mark Anthony Carpio said the group will do a mass with famous composers and classical performances for those opera shows, and instead give a "camp-out style" concert. They will perform cuts from their album, "Madz in Love Collection." The Madz will go into "Grand American Tour" in the months ahead.

'America in 3D' road show

The US Embassy in Manila is launching "America in 3D: A Road Show on Diplomacy, Development and Defense," a program by Ambassador Harry K. Thomas that highlights American culture, values and society. It will take the tribulang on the road throughout the Philippines for a multi-day series of cultural performances, community service projects, sports clinics, film screenings and information exhibits.

The first "America in 3D" event will be at March 19-20 at SM City North Edsa. There will be rock musical and dance programs featuring the US Navy's 7th Fleet Band, Jazzmobile, Mike Potenza and the UST Jazz Ensemble.

There will also be digital video conference with Hi Ace White House executive chef Cristeta Comerford, live fire cooking demonstrations and a seminar on biomedical ethics. US food and logistics American food companies, a job fair with over 6,000 available jobs from 23 recruiting companies, tour programs describing the visa process, five exhibits that deepen understanding of the United States while exploring its cuisines and direct interaction with Embassy staff, six basketball clinics with top players and coaches from the Philippine Basketball Association; two baseball clinics led by Filipino players, six show with comedy and musician Showcases; six policy discussions, and film screenings with the Embassy's subject matter experts, and three programs monitoring higher education in the United States. Visit events, seminars, or Facebook.

Photography exhibit

"Interior for M," a photo exhibit that tells stories of how the National Museum was erased in the Filipinos' lives, opens March 24, 4 p.m. at Shangri-La Plaza East atrium. The exhibit is part of Ducati's Commemorations' Interior for All Anniversary. Nineteen photographers, Agnes Espaldon, Jose Enrique and Jinan Bilagod who have traveled all over the Philippines to capture the images. It runs until March 27.

Beatles songs in gig

Beatles songs will be performed live by the Hindi band Henry Krday morning tonight at Bobo Mojito in Annapolis Street, Greenhills. Jumbo Dino Rowdy and Alberto Bitz, San Juan Observatory at 10 p.m. Fee is P600, inclusive of a.m. Call 721-0229 or 721-9793.

Free haircut in malls

Beauty expert Ricky Reyes launches Hair Clinic, a new treatment for backbiter hair available in his salons in a series of malls tours that includes a hair show, free hair consultations and analysis. Treatments today at SM Megamall, March 25 at SM Calamba and April 1 at SM City North Edsa. Call 721-1789 or 725-6440.

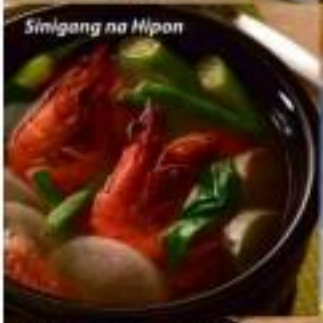
Seafood Selections promo

Fill up your Seafood Selections card and get a Chicken-All-You-Can gift certificate.

Spicy Laing Tilapia

Camaron Rebosado

Fish Fillet in Black Bean Sauce



Sinigang na Hipon

Steamed Fish Fillet in Light Soy

Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet

Sinigang na Tiyan ng Bangus

Promo mechanics:

1. Customer gets a Seafood Selections promo card upon purchase of any of the featured dishes together with a glass of Pepsi.
2. To complete the Seafood Selections promo card, 2 dates must be filled up by purchasing the same dish products prepared by Max's.
   The remaining 3 slots can be filled up by purchasing any of the other Seafood Selections (SS) paraluman meal from a glass of Pepsi.
3. Upon completion of stickers, customer must surrender a filled up Seafood Selections promo card to redeem a Chicken-All-You-Can gift certificate.
4. Stickers may be obtained from March 8 to April 30, 2011.
5. Redemption of Chicken-All-You-Can gift certificates will be from March 8 to June 30, 2011 | not valid on Lenten season dates.
6. Promo runs from March 8 to April 30, 2011 | valid for dine-in and take-out orders only | one customer redemption per promo card with other promos or discounts.

Promo runs from March 8 to April 30, 2011 | Buy 100 SS Paraluman Meal (with Pepsi) to get 1

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Good news for shopaholics

Credit card gives hot deal

HSBC president and CEO Tony Cripps with Alice Ocampo

By Stef Cabal

INC USE our credit cards to pay for daily expenditures—gas, groceries, home improvement, recreation—and even simple splurging for shopping.

HSBC recently added a feature to its Red MasterCard to give you more bang for your buck. It's not just a promo for a limited time; it's a permanent addition.

This could make it the best deal in town.

"The HSBC MasterCard is the first credit card in the Philippines exclusively for women," says Tony Cripps, president and CEO of HSBC Philippines. "The HSBC Red MasterCard understands what women value, and helps them achieve their gold and aspirations in life."

"There are a lot of cards in the market that offer a lot of different things," says Annette Tirol, HSBC's deputy head of Personal Financial Services. "But MasterCard really talks to the women, in the romance to everyone."

According to Tirol, for every P2,000 spent everyday you get a P100 gift certificate or P100 off from selected retailers. Whether it's shopping, groceries, movies, salon or spa treatments, the Red MasterCard has every woman's needs covered.

"Would you like a cup of coffee with your hairstand at Starbucks? Treat him for a cup of coffee?" asks Tirol.

"It's on you, because you have a charge slip worth P2,000. Or do you want to buy a gift at any SM establishment, Watsons's, Baby & Co. or Stores 101 for you want to go for a Citi massage at Chi Spa? Again, use your Red MasterCard charge slip," says Tirol.

Dollar treats

At the launch at Makati Shangri-La, the presentation of participating merchants was done in Vhenli's favorite "things" fashion. Guests were showered with consumer's festival things from HSBC's partner merchants, led by HSBC senior vice president Johanna Garcia.

GMDAP Communications and Sustainability SVP Johanna Garcia and Personal Financial Services Head Annette Tirol share their favorite things from Forever 21, The Body Shop, The Face Shop and SM Department Store.

DESIGNER'S SPACE

WHERE THEY CREATE AND WORK

GRAY basics echo the bare concrete floor.

ACCENT pieces are kept to a minimum.

UNIQUE he relies a piece: include oil-on-canvas rabbit and stainless steel stools.

AMONG Noel Crisostomo's many tools of the trade are his drawing instruments and MacBook Pro.

Industrial chic —without the wasted space

Fashion designer Noel Crisostomo draws from his architecture background to keep his atelier no-frills and functional

By Alex Y. Vergara

THANKS to his background in architecture, designer Noel Crisostomo knows exactly what he wanted and how to achieve it, as he transformed a basement unit in Makati into his shop-cum-workspace.

He maximized the limited space to create a "working environment" similar to the studio type atelier he had in Toronto, Canada.

Crisostomo, then an architecture student at the University of Santo Tomas, had to cut short his education when he and his family migrated to Canada in the late '80s.

As soon as he was settled, he resumed his schooling at Ryerson University in Toronto. But instead of going back to architecture, he pursued a degree in fashion design.

"Architecture is all about designing and planning spaces well," he says. "One of my key concerns when I moved into this unit was how I could fully utilize a tight space, and still come up with a nice shop."

He covered about 16 walls full-length mirrors so Crisostomo and clients can, and instead of using the usual off-white walls, silver-gray accent beams and built-in cabinets.

He had the scattered vinyl tiles that were with the unit removed, as they disliked with the look he wanted. He settled for the unit's original rust concrete floor and had it smoothened and polished.

The neutral color scheme gave the space a clean, modern industrial feel without the exposed pipes and wirings as those to death in some features and fabrications.

Make room for the basics

"When your space is not that big, it pays to keep the look clean and minimal," says Crisostomo. "Apart from considering the foot traffic, you must make sure that the basics before you even start thinking of the décor."

And that includes a fairly big, all-purpose table he uses for sketching, patter-making, cutting and entertaining clients. He has a similar table in the production area on the second floor.

There are a few accent pieces and a working table. Apart from Crisostomo's ex-Intible MacBook Pro, countless pencils and other drawing instruments are within easy reach.

Since he also offers ready-to-wear, he set aside space for an L-shaped clothes rack where key pieces hang from his current collection.

"These days, you can't rely purely on made-to-order," he says. "I decided to display some of my clothes to give clients, especially walk-in and first timers, an idea of what I can do."

His strategy seems to be working, but a few clothes on display catch the clients' fancy. Some ask him to either alter the clothes or make a bigger, more Quiet-Ballroom version.

In lieu of artworks and exotic figurines, Crisostomo opted to display framed photographs of his works, including cover clothing articles Crisostomo himself wore the first to feature him when he made the big move to Manila). Coffeetable books and back issues of glossy magazines are neatly arranged on shelves that line one side of the dining area.

Also for some whimsical touches such as glass vases with real leaves that double as flower holders for the entrance, shiny stools, a black faux crocodile leather couch, and several Eames-made padded chairs, the place is nearly devoid of clutter.

Crisostomo is one designer who'd rather let his sharp, tailored pieces speak for themselves.

Noel Crisostomo's shop is at 288-A Pablo Ocampo Sr. Ave. (formerly Tito Cruz Ave.) corner Antipolo St., Makati; tel. no. 8997278, 0917 888 5422.

VIVID the rust concrete floor and built-in cabinets.

Good news for shopaholics

From page D1

Among the treats guests took home were scented candles from SM Our Home, a glittery evening bag and bangle from Forever 21, Soft Hands Kind Heart hand cream and yummy body butter from The Body Shop, fruit Jelly Tube sparkling lip gloss and nail polish from The Face Shop, and other wonderful surprises.

"What we are really excited about is that for the women, we are proud to say that the Red MasterCard has a lot of real value. It really gives you value-added services because we really listen, because we want to make sure we actually give you what is important to you," says Ned.

Participating merchants include Ace Hardware, Bench & Co., Forever 21, Fullcrew Filipinas, Mabuhay, One Home, Save More, SM Appliance, SM Cinemas, SM Department Store, SM Hypermarket, SM Supermarket, Sports Central, Starplus Shop, Toy Kingdom, Watsons, Hands To Serve, Blue Water Day Spa, Chi Spa at Shangri-La, Ilotip Ministry of Shining, The Body Shop and The Face Shop.

The HSBC Red MasterCard feature began July 1 with redemption valid within 30 days of purchases or transactions date as indicated on the credit card's charge slip.

WHEN you spend P1,000 at Forever 21 using your HSBC Red MasterCard, get a P1,00 SM gift certificate and use it to get more neat things and steps.

SPEND P2,000 using your HSBC Red MasterCard and get a P1,00 SM Gift Pass, and treat your skin to Body Shop's Papaya Body Butter.

New French leather collection

SLEDGERS, a leading French men's shoes and fashion-essential brand, has come up with the Sledgers Leather Goods Collection.

All made from top-grade imported calf leather, the collection has polished appeal and elegant simplicity with functional details.

Classically designed, each leather accessory evokes manly, fine styling: luxurious, "built-to-last-a-long" and efficiently durable.

For global explorers and seasoned business travelers, Sledgers has passport holders... Side, Tower, Smith, Victor and Volvo—which are available in brown and black colors.

Each passport holder is designed to perfectly fit one's passport, including cardholders which conveniently accommodate important documents such as boarding pass and valid IDs.

Another fine business accessory are Sledgers' wallets, which are offered in a variety of distinct designs for both billfold and clutch styles. With an infinite choice of textures and colors, the new wallet designs include Victoria, Vito, Brutacio, Vic and Will (long wallets); and Hyatt, Volvat, Preston, Vander and Valdez (short wallets).

"We have five different styles of leather for each of our accessories," said Sledgers brand manager Patrick Chow. "For example, our long wallets come in five different kinds of calf leathers and so forth. This is to guarantee that customers will enjoy shopping for their essentials because of the store's plethora of choices."

Sledgers latest Leather Goods 2011 Collection, exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Primer Group of Companies, is now available at the SM Mall of Asia, Ayala Trinoma, SM North using Cebu and select Travel Club outlets in Metro Manila.

POLISHED LOOK. Sledgers' long wallets

SMALL, handy, elegant leather essentials

SLEDGERS widely recognize tall leather

The best hair for the Filipina's 'complicated' lifestyle

By Carmencita Sienet
Contributor

She has to deal with humidity, heat and stress, so the golden rule, says Franck Provost's Lauren Herbert, is 'treatment, treatment, treatment'

AS I WALKED into the sleek salon that is Franck Provost Studio at the Fort, I looked around for the man I was to interview. I figured that the stand out, he must be "the guy."

Then enough, I was greeted by a towering presence with hair tools in hand. Warm, welcoming and surprisingly down-to-earth, he was quick to dispel my preconceived notions of the typical salon hairstylist. As he talked about the shoot in a charming French accent, anyone would see how excited he was to get to it and style some hair.

Dreaming about travel and seeing different cultures led Laurent Herbert, the salon's manager, to the profession he has grown to love. When his impression of being a flight attendant didn't work out, he decided to do what came naturally to him.

"I was thinking, 'What can I do next?' As I have five sisters and I loved playing with their hair from time to time, the idea came," he says.

He trained for five years before he became a professional hair stylist. He joined Franck Provost in 1999.

"The funny part is, as a hairstylist you can actually travel and see different cultures, as well."

Wanting to show different hairstyles on women with different ethnicities, lifestyles and looks, he enlisted three of his clients to be models for a day. Bar Inn Pastor, an architect and avid aging doctor, he transformed her hair with a mid-length and disheveled up to look au naturel, and applied the latest color of Olivia Bella, which is ammonia free, perfect for sensitive skin and formulated in a way that enables the hair to last longer.

"I used a cold iridescent color and light brown so it would look natural and reflect more on the natural base," he says.

LAUREN on Pascale Bonnet

SOFT curls on Erika Bolantagat

DEKTRACTURED curl on Iris Pastor

FRANCK Provost's Lauren Herbert

Different diagnoses

On Bonnet Bonnell, a French mother of two, Laurent added bangs and some mid-length layers on her long tresses. He adds, "The color I chose to work with was Majirel chocolate 4.15, as I wanted to darken her base to bronze her bangs."

On Erika Bolantagat, a nurse, he opted for a more trendy look and did a digital perm to give her soft curls.

Herbert's clients cringe from Asian to Caucasian women, so he has separate hat hairdo on different hair types and textures. "The diagnoses for Asian and Caucasian hair are so different when it comes to haircuts, as Asian hair is thicker, and hair coloring. Because of the pigment of Asian hair, one get a bit more careful about coloring it as as not to damage the hair," he says.

Corrain Blomfelt take a soft cut hair, as well. "Somehow women in Manila have a more complicated lifestyle and because of the weather, heat and humidity there is more stress. So they have to pamper their hair more."

However, he is quick to point out that no matter how different one's lifestyle and ethnicity is, one must follow the golden rule: treatment, treatment, treatment. "It's really important to do hair treatments, especially if you've had your hair colored or you're used to curling and ironing your hair. Do the treatment the same day as your cutting day, and follow it up with three treatments days a month. Hair treatments will restore the wellness of your hair, colored or not."

When asked about the hair trends women should watch out for, he says, "For me to follow the trend is to know what my customers are and who they want to be."

At times demure and reserved, it is the relationship between the hairstylist and the client that really makes the difference. "Looks from the '20s, '40s, '50s, and so on just keep coming back. So it's really how you can apply the trends on your customers and how they will benefit it. You must always respect how your customer feels, what kind of woman she is and wants to be."

PHOTOGRAPHER'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT: [illegible]
MAKE-UP ARTIST: [illegible]
HAIR STYLIST: [illegible]
STYLIST: [illegible]
MODELS: [illegible]
SPECIAL THANKS TO: [illegible]
LOCATION: [illegible]

SM MALL OF ASIA
Exciting Events You Can't Miss!

This month is packed with activities and events that will take shopping and entertainment to the next level. You won't believe what's in store for you. SM Mall of Asia, the country's ultimate destination for all things spectacular, rolls out the red carpet for the hottest happenings, this side of the metro! This bayside mall is fast becoming the country's social hub, where lifestyle and leisure options abound for families and friends. Satisfy your craving for a world-class shopping experience with a stretch of local and international arcades as far as the eye can see. Tempt yourself with a delectable choice of bistros and cafes. Catch the latest movies in high-definition theaters. Take a spin around the Olympic-sized ice skating rink. Or spend an incredible day by simply relaxing by one of the most beautiful sunsets by the bay.

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For more details and inquiries, you may call 556-0680 or visit our website at www.smmallofasia.com.

Hannah Marbella: A Phenomenal Exhibit
March 17 to 19 | 10AM to 10PM
G/F Main Mall (near Ice Skating Rink)

Hannah Marbella is a nine-year old prodigy with a phenomenal gift on his hands. Marvel at his artistic genius and talent for creating exceptional masterpieces of women and womanhood with an exhibit and an on-the-spot painting session.

Opera Belles
March 26, 2011 | Main Mall Atrium
5pm

The Opera Belles are three classically-trained young ladies, who have joined forces to form the country's first female pop-classical crossover group. Catch the dynamic and talented trio from Sony Music Entertainment and the Philippine Opera Company perform live at the Main Mall Atrium.

Meet and Greet the Azkals
March 18 | 6PM | Music Hall

You've asked for them! And now here they are! SM MOA invites you to meet and greet the strong and dashing Global Pinoys—the Azkals. The Philippine National Football has made the Filipino nation proud as they continue to rise to the ranks of ferocious players across Asia. So be the envy of all your friends when you get the chance to take pictures of them and with them!

Justin Bieber: My World Tour Concert at SM Mall of Asia
May 10, 2011 | SM Mall of Asia Concert Ground

Chart-topping hits like "Baby" has got your body shaking to each beat. Now get a chance to win Special VIP passes to Meet and Greet the one and only Justin Bieber, when he hits the shores of Manila for his My World Tour concert on May 10, 2011! See posters and print ad for more details or visit www.ticketworld.com.ph

MAC and Wonder Woman
March 25, 2011 | Main Mall Atrium | 10AM to 10PM

Feel powerful and ravishing like an Amazonian princess as MAC launches the Wonder Woman Collection. Step into the world of MAC and Wonder Woman as Glamazons invite guests to make-up demos, make-up sessions and photo shoots taken comic book-style. Glam up with MAC's Wonder Woman Collection and be the first to own this amazing set!

I ♥ being a WOMAN

The Body Shop's Be A Hero Campaign
March 17 to 22, 2011 | Main Mall Atrium
10am-10pm

Come to SM MOA this Saturday, March 17, and join The Body Shop's 'Stand-Up and BE A HERO' campaign. Purchase their Soft Hands Kind Heart Hand Cream and support the global campaign to stop sex trafficking of children and young people.

You can also visit The Body Shop booth from March 17 to March 23 (everyday!) for free make over sessions, personality development seminars and skin care consultations.

The Body Shop Shisha BB Cream Launch
March 27, 2011 | Main Mall Atrium | 3 PM

Watch a sensational fashion show of beautiful and empowered women strutting down the runaway for the launch of The Body Shop's new Shisha BB Creams.

China brings home the gold and glory

China's Liuyang Jinshang Fireworks, Co. triumphs at the Second Philippine International Pyromusical Competition. Receiving second and third place, respectively, are Jubilee Fireworks from the United Kingdom and Tomasa Kinahon Fireworks, Co from Japan. Presenting the awards were SM Premier Malls VP Steven T. Tan and Mel Sta. Ana of Platinum Fireworks Inc.

For inquiries, call 556-0680, or log on to www.smmallofasia.com. Free mallwide Wi Fi

Baby photos to treasure and enjoy

GET SHOTS like this at Stork Studio.

Sandara Park is the face of Korean beauty brand Etude

IN THESE crying times, thinking positive and surrounding ourselves with people we love is essential. One thing I am looking forward to is giving birth. This is so because a baby brings hope and joy to everyone.

Another thing I am looking forward to is having a baby and having my baby's photos shot by the Stork Studio.

I regret that with my first-rate habits, I was too scared to bring them around until they were at least three months old. That's the reason why my boys had photos from Stork Studio only later.

To be honest, I had had my little pho-tographed by several studios, but I was not happy with their ser-

MAYI U

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

"HAHAHA really adores Big! We even race to see who gets to cuddle 'Papa' first or who has the last hug goodbye when he leaves for a meeting. I also love this picture because it shows how close Big and Amanda really are. Truly Papa's little girl."—Marge Escalleras

"CLAUDIA was five months old when this photo was taken. She wouldn't stop laughing as Stan and he played with her. They definitely have that magic touch."—Janna Evangelista

Joey Mead, Suzi Abrera's instant beauty fixes for summer

LAYING OUT the company's strategy for the year, rushing projects before the Holy Week lull, and planning that long delayed beach trip all at the same time can make for a very haggard girl. With so much to do, it's easy to neglect your appearance from time to time.

But in this well-documented digital age, the last thing you'd want is to see that Facebook photo tagging you, your publicly hair—and your boss.

To keep you looking like a beach bunny (for summer) instead of a burned desperately needing one, we've done the testing and have some top-notch list of the latest instant-fix products.

1. Clear Up White Stow Intelligarde

Worry about teeth stains no more. This toothpaste is the first that instantly whitens teeth after just one brush. Its breakthrough blue foam technology creates an instant, preventative visual effect on your teeth. The technology is not abrasive at based on chemical agents that whitening kits and other whitening toothpastes have, so everyday use is ok today.

2. GoodSkin Labs Instant Pitch-Dix Duo Set

Frustrates of pouch is a relic, these products instantly help relax the look of facial lines, and they do it within minutes of application. They target both resting lines and wrinkles for instant and long-term wrinkle reduction. For the instant effect, apply the Deep Wrinkle Filler to the expression lines you wish to erase by first pushing it into lines or wrinkles, allowing it to set two to three minutes. You'll literally see the wrinkles smooth and before your eyes.

Contains Tri-Mineline Instant Deep Wrinkle Filler 0.7 oz. Alcoline Total Face Instant Line Reducing Moisturizer Orig. tind. price is P1,200, now at P1,900 (savings of 25 percent). Available in selected Watsons Personal Care Stores and Shoemuseum Mall of Asia.

3. GoodSkin Labs Epilgelen-2 Eye Lift + Circle wellness (available in selected Watsons Personal Care Stores and Shoemuseum Mall of Asia).

This one treats three concerns and two bags. This multi-action, eye lift and circle reducer decreases eye puffiness and dark circles over time. The Eye Lift instantly and visibly reduces puffiness within minutes. For your supply it in the morning before going to work, and at night after cleansing and prepping skin. By the time you reach the office, those gold fish bags are gone.

But wait yet! I asked these ladies to share their favorite quick-fix products.

"Estee Lauder Perfectionist CP+ Deep Wrinkle Filler is the closest we have ever come to finding the fountain of youth. It is a super product that fills in and smoothens out lines and wrinkles. Use it on crow's feet and laugh lines and literally watch them disappear. It's like Botox without affecting facial movement! Use it on problem areas before putting on your foundation to prevent your makeup from 'falling into the cracks.' I like to use it around my lips because it fills in the fine lines around it and stops lipstick from bleeding."—Amanda Padilla, makeup artist

"When I saw all my lines, I felt older. So I started using Tri-Mineline quality and start using products that can help reduce lines and make me look and feel younger instantly."—Suzi Abrera, TV host and celebrity mom

"Looking your best on a budget is easy if you know the secrets. A simple dosage of Cloverfresh from a source to a sunny one can light up your face. Making sure my teeth are healthy and bright could mean spending thousands of pesos on bleaching. But thanks to Close Up White Now, I save gradually lighter my teeth and keep them in tip-top shape. I can see the difference when I glow my lips with a dark shade."—Joey Mead, host and model

CLOSE Up White Now

JOEY Mead

SUZI Abrera

AMANDA Padilla

Anti-wrinkle duo set helps relax the look of facial lines in a jiffy

ESTEE Lauder Perfectionist CP+ Deep Wrinkle Filler

BACKSTAGE Pass

Isabel Roces

Baby photos to treasure and enjoy

From page E1

ness. First they didn't give CD copies of the photos, which means if I wanted a copy I had to go to them—and they would charge a ridiculous price. Second, they charged a ruining fee. I feel they were taking advantage of parents.

With Hark Studio, not only do the pictures come out great, but the whole experience is very pleasant. I can bring home the CD and have the photos retouched as much as I want. In fact, for the past Christmases, I've been using the photos for our family cards.

I try to take the babies every three months to Hark Studio, when they turn a year old, I take them there once a year.

Friends who go to the shop have no complaints.

Stork Studio also does wonderful shots of pregnant moms. Although I must admit I haven't finalized the package to do this with my earlier pregnancies, I am seriously thinking about having it done soon.

Stella Gerasco and Stanley Ong make up Stork Studio. They are professional photographers specializing in children, having

"LUCAS was just a week old when this photo was taken. They were such experts in handling him that I won't LOSE sessions. I know having this shoot is one of the best gifts given to us ever. We are SO totally happy about the photo, and it was a privilege to be able to experience these pets at work."—Giselle Pigozzi

"ETHAN looks always like he's up to something. I'm only so glad to make outstanding pictures every time, and they are fantastic with him. They really know how to capture them precious moments."—Bianca Elizalde

"THIS photo was taken when Athena was nine days old. What I love about this photo is how it captures the purity of a newborn baby. Aside from taking beautiful newborn photos, Stork Studio has a wide selection of props, and they make sure the baby is safe and comfortable throughout the shoot."—Suzi Licaros

For bookings, check out www.thestorkstudio.com, facebook.com/thestorkstudio, twitter.com/storkstudio, e-mail thestorkstudio@gmail.com.

Etude and Sandara

Etude is a French word which means "to study." Now, it is also the name for a makeup brand whose product lines are affordable and well packaged.

With other members of the team, I visited the Etude House in several collections for this series in Mitz Tanguilig, modeled by no other than Sandara Park.

BABY 88

How to shop the beauty counters with confidence and savvy

COUNTER check

DESPITE a few time-consuming experiences at department stores in downtown stores in New York City, I actually still get a kick out of discovering and purchasing new skincare products and cosmetics by browsing the sometimes overwhelming array of beauty counters.

After yet another harrowing experience feeling unwanted upon buying something I hadn't planned or couldn't afford, I realized it was time to try down the (beauty) lane and see things straight.

BEAUTY RX

Mariel Chua

From dealing with pushy sales associates (who, in retrospect, are only trying to make a living like you and me) to satisfying budget-bound customer (who then meet items in this category are noncommittal), here are pointers to keep in mind the next time you are near one the cosmetics floor.

1. Be shameless. As mentioned above, counter salespeople are there to earn their keep and are simply doing their best to reach their monthly quota. So, if an associate seems overly pushy be calm. At least check out the product at touch it. Be a first-grazer, if the product doesn't suit you, smile, say thank you, and walk away.

2. No means no. A trip to the counter could easily elicit memories of high school peer pressure. It's the same advice: stand your own. Just say no. Unless declining, ensure politely for skincare products and makeup are stringent. And, you'll probably have no luck disposing the transaction on your needs and with your bank. So, unless you absolutely sure afford the purchase and have the resistance to experiment with something you're 50-50 about, say no, and walk away.

3. Timing is key. Sometimes, you do need the extra attention and advice of a cosmetics professional. To get the best treatment during those times, wait in during "slow" periods, such as right after opening on weekdays. Weekends and holidays are often the worst time to expect a full makeover from your favorite cosmetic.

Since companies rely on the busy season and heavy foot traffic to make maximum profit, the process is set for sales associates to mind the bottom line. The good news: The helping mob is over and you can now expect better customer service (version back in December).

4. Communicate your needs. And, as a courtesy for thorough prospecting, try to buy something you've tried on. However, if you know you've not ready to shell out cash or swipe your card at the moment, make it clear to the salesperson that you are only browsing for now and will come back another time to make a purchase.

Ask for her business card to the process and promise you'll look for her when you're ready to shop. Also, express that you wouldn't mind if she left you to look around while she attends to another customers. It's only fair for all parties.

50 years of premium hair coloring

TAKING in the sights: Joana Yapangco, Nikki Basay, AJ Tolentino, Nicole Jadaone and Raya Monsanto

By Joana M Yapangco
Contributor

SCHWARZKOPF'S IGORA Royal brand of hair coloring recently marked 50 years in the market. Started in 1961 as Schwarzkopf's flagship hair colorant, Igora Royal remains at the top of the hair industry, known for its brilliant pigment and full coverage of grays.

The celebration of Igora Royal's 50th anniversary was held in Illinois, along with the unveiling of Schwarzkopf's Essential Look. I was privileged to be invited to the event, accompanied by AJ Tolentino and Nikki Basay, the Schwarzkopf "ambassadors" from the Philippines. The two represent the best of Philippine hairdressing, as the gathering of hairstylists from all over the world, I was very proud to see that the Filipino stylists involved there formed the region.

The Igora Royal's golden year, Schwarzkopf looked back at the brand's evolution. Since Ellis, global director for professional partnership, emphasized the importance of innovation and education in the growth not just of the brand, but also of the company.

Changing times

In the same way that Igora Royal has changed and broadened according to the changing times, so have the products of Schwarzkopf. Through technology, research and feedback, product development has made leaps and bounds, said global product development manager Lizette Valentine.

For inspiration, Schwarzkopf looks to the fashion seasons of the world to keep up with trends. From the catwalks of Paris, looks are translated into wearable, real hair. Support is then provided to the brand's ambassadors across the globe. Each country has a training center where salons can send their teams to learn the latest trends and techniques.

As brand ambassadors, Nikki and AJ are tasked to trade local salons what they have learned. This also primed up to be a critical bus because even more imperative to consumers—who are now savvy about what's good or bad for them—by maintaining a website that provides comprehensive information about the brand.

There's also Schwarzkopf's charity called Shaping Futures, which trains underprivileged students in the basics of hairdressing and how to run their own hairstyling business. For some, this became their career of a their mother a tree in a village, but it's a business and life that Schwarzkopf said it is committed to help through its company heritage, continuing mission and first-rate products found through the years.

THE PHILIPPINE delegation posing o/a "Gossip Girl" at the Schwarzkopf exhibit

IGORA Royal remembers the '60s

Schwarzkopf's Igora Royal is the company's flagship product—and for good reason

NEW NAIL SPA BRANCH

California Nails and Day Spa recently opened its 150 branch, at G/F, 101 Shoppesville Arcade, Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan. The day spa is known for its premium nail treatments such as acrylic, gel nails, facials, massage and body waxing. Its new branch is owned by franchisee Edna Dolores. At the opening and inaugural of shop key are California Nails and Day Spa franchisor Lydia Horta and Edna Dolores with husband engineer Emmanuel Dolores, eldest son Bruce and Basil Dolores. Call 3091526 or 5053631.

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SMART VICTORY LINER, INC. CLARK INQUIRER

How to choose and apply the right makeup for your eye type

ITS SURPRISING what a little eye makeup can do to brighten, lengthen or widen our eyes. It can even go as far as enhance their shape and balance out features.

But, and we ladies know this, from experience, doing our own eye makeup is tricky if requires shading and blending in the right places, also, it doesn't hurt to have a steady hand for precise application. A lot of practice pays off, as well as knowing how to apply makeup for your eye type.

Read on to find out which eye makeup accoutrements you, whether you have round or chinito eyes, or eyes set far apart or close together.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Kelly Mina

'Chinito' eyes

If you are chinito, then you know your eye makeup should be all about creating a smoky eye and long-lasting base/lash set. Make-brown eyeshadow is your best bet when it comes to getting that look right, so make sure your base is in the shade that complements your skin tone (look for shades in sand, tan, brown and coffee).

To get that smoky eye right, apply the shadow from your lash line, blending outward until just smoky (not brow bone/eyes can feel it... just follow the outline of your eye socket). The important thing here is to blend, blend, blend, until your eyeshadow softly fades outwards. Then, gently line the insides of your lash line with a soft black or brown waterproof eyeliner and apply two coats of mascara after you've curled your lashes.

Round eyes

Round, saucer-like eyes will look elongated by with a wing drawn using eyeliner. You can try different application – a soft wing, or bold eyeliner (gravely smudged) at the edges, or a hard-edged wing which is drawn with waterproof liner, or a dramatic wing that uses liquid liner.

The trick is to start lining from two thirds of your upper and lower lash lines, starting from the inner part drawing outward. Then, connect both lines at the edge and trys it upa little (skip lining your lower lash line when using liquid liner). Stay it up by connecting lining manner on the outer corners of your lashes, or by wearing false lashes.

KISS's Infamous

GOT A beauty question? E-mail the author at ask.lifefreda@gmail.com.

It's about shading, blending and a steady hand for precise application

Droopy eyes

To offset droopy eyes, sweep eyeshadow on the outer contours of the eye, concentrating on the area before the brow bone, as always, it is important to blend the shadow well, sweeping a subtle upward dust on each outer corner. Finish the look by drawing along the upper lash lines using waterproof liner and even extending it a little to follow the angle of the shadow.

Close-set eyes

Eyes that look too close together will benefit from applying eyeshadow and liner on their outer edges. Dark matte shadows and eyeliner should be drawn from the middle of the lash line, blending outward.

Another way to create the illusion of space between the eyes is by using a soft, shimmery shadow on the inner corners of the eyes until the tri's. Then, draw your liner from the middle of the eye going outward.

Wide-set eyes

To bridge the gap between your eyes, start your eyeshadow from the inner corners of your eyes, but let it fade before you get to the outer contours. The same rule should be followed when lining your eyes. Put emphasis on the inner corners of the eyes, and avoid light shimmery eyeshadows, unless it is properly blended with a dark or neutral shadow.

BLEND to perfection

Baby photos to treasure ... from page 12

We all had some makeup lessons using the new collection and it was a refreshing change to the makeup we are used to (cutting on ourselves).

Gone on a whole, it is good to try different color and looks. We will never know what will suit us unless we try. Here are the three looks from Etude you can do on yourself. Together, let us study these looks and discover what works for us.

ET:EDU is available at SM department stores.

Editor's love Etude products

I love Etude House's 6H Magic Cream because it gives my makeup a prodiured and luminous finish. It adds a certain glow to the face and hides blemishes as well.—Dhyanne Reyes-Ishiko, EIC, Mega magazine

My favorite Etude House product is Moistfulin Un Perfume tilted bronzer in tropical fruity scent brings me back to a happy place the South!...Beverly Dalton, managing editor, Fresh magazine

My favorite is Etude House's the Proof 10 brush/brow because it fills my brows with the right amount of color without making it look too dark, unlike other brow fillers. And it's also perfect for our humid weather because it stays on the whole day.—Cindy Go, Beauty editor, Preview

I'm no beauty junkie, but I discovered so many things to love about Etude House. At the top of my list is their AC Clinic Pink Powder Spot. This overnight treatment works wonders on a mostly oil by effortlessly drying it up! I also like Etude clinch brush that comes with a built-in sponge applicator, which makes it so easy to apply! For just "scoop" it onto the cheeks and spread evenly.—Ella Pamela-Cruz, EIC, Smart Parenting

How to tame wild curls and have sexy summer hair

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

WHILE THE colder months leading up to the holidays bring dry skin, discomfort like itchy skin and chapped lips, the hot summer months we are beginning to experience bring about hair disasters. This is the season beauty salons just shovel the most cash.

Those with the slightest hint of wave will frizz, the naturally curly will go ultra frizz that may get out of control, while those with straight fine hair will experience hair oil drip and greasy hair; their scalp will get exposed so they may look like they're balding.

I researched something done here in chginki parlors was out of the question for me. My hair attempt left me with fried ends that took months to grow out into a bangs for a few months of lush wavy-stylized hair.

Majority of the people I know have wavy thick hair and have been avoiding the virtues of Brazilia treatment which, when done and maintained correctly, gives them the sleek, blow-dried, smooth, silky hair that lasts almost three to four months for most and even up to eight months for a few.

Those with very curly hair would prefer flatter and straighter hair like the effect rebonding has, it is the preferable Asian hair texture. But with hair, they instead get the lush sex symbol waves of a Pamela Anderson and a Heather Graham. And they're disappointed! Some people can just so hard to please!

Most stylists upon spotting how thin my pin straight hair is at the crown area and fine everywhere else would insist this treatment is going a person would emphasize the bald spots and would be a waste of product and money as my hair strands are already very straight.

As with every horrible hair dilemma, I come running in Hong Kong-born and trained Louie Phillipine Rue who can fix my hair in his sleep. When I first came to him, he took one look at the exposed scalp and the unequally fried ends and had concocted which me off for a shampoo to be followed by a haircut by him.

To my surprise, he said I would have the Keratin treatment done afterwards to keep the length of my hair smooth, fixed and shiny. But he said he would apply a special ironing technique to add volume to my crown.

Special instructions

Here are some suggestions: No shampoo, tying of hair, clips, hair bands and exercising for mind outs for at least 48 hours.

The greasiness and sweats of my scalp after the 24-hour mask are scary. The hair I couldn't tuck behind the ear made my cheeks/streak me. The side I did tuck behind my ear before the 48-hour mark were fine this annoying permanent curves.

To make effect last as long as possible, use less to use the special keratin shampoo and conditioner available at the salon which costs P950 each, so yes its not much off the solution that coats and protects your hair while making it shiny and manageable at the same time.

Try to limit shampoo to once a day to keep keratin on longer. Others who wash every other day still enjoy the wash-and-wear effect after eight months.

How is the treatment different from rebonding?

AFTER

The hair won't come out as straight as rebonding for most because unlike rebonding, which penetrates the shaft and changes hair's natural structure, keratin merely coats and nourishes the strands – which weighs them down straighter. Fifty to weeks and shampoo, and grows a bright that reflects shine.

There is no damage post-Keratin, but it won't limit wild curls as effectively like rebonding does.

Louie Bacarisas is at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, tel. 4304840 and Greenhills, 7214940.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

NATORI
print dresses; fringe-hem Spring/Summer 2011 collection

Natori launches swimwear and home accessories

She admittedly started 'at the back door' with lingerie. Now, designer Josie Natori is adding on more product lines—and embracing the Net

By Melanie J. Zamora
LifeStyle Desk

WHO WOULD have guessed that a successful banker would one day become one of the most recognizable names in fashion?

But Wall Street to where Josie and husband Ben Natori acquired the

NATORI, P2

MS. ALONZO wins handicapiano—a piano-shaped pearl necklace, with coral and silver trees as pendant. The piece is on the rose gate Mel's creative addition.

Once Pag-Ibig chair, now jewelry maker and 'art-preneur'

Zorayda Amelia Alonzo says it wasn't meant to be a business—until friends began buying

By Jennifer S. Tayao

AFEW years into her retirement, after spending more than 20 years in government, former Pag-Ibig chair Zorayda Amelia "Mel" Alonzo had a career "accident."

SHOES, P3

Once Pag-Ibig chair, now jewelry maker and 'art-preneur'

From page F1

It left her no kind of trauma, in fact, she's quite happy about it...her accidental discovery of her enthusiasm not as jewelry-making.

It was actually Alonzo's daughter who made it to go into the craft. Alonzo knows where to go—the Cottage Industry Technology Center in Marikina—since she had also worked in the Department of Trade.

"SOTEC is not well known; it's inside BIR Village," says Alonzo. "They also have a glass-making center."

Alonzo and her daughter spent half a day learning the basics—specifically, how to pair or match beads. Their lessons were all on the technicalities, like how to string properly.

"You might say I am 'unschooled' in design," says Alonzo. "The designs I do now are borne out of my growing up with jewelry (she got her first pair of diamond earrings at a young age from her aunt), traveling and seeing jewelry all over the world."

Alonzo says her previous medical skill is good as well. Since it was nearing Christmas season (she and her daughter took the lessons in September 2009), Alonzo decided she'll give away her creations as gifts to close friends.

That's when the "accident" happened.

"I laid [the necklaces] out on a table and told my friends: 'Okay, you can choose one and that's my gift to you,'" Alonzo recalls. "One of them picked up two, one to each hand, and said, 'Okay. Mel. This one's your gift to me, and this one I'll buy from you.' That really startled me."

AT HER WORKSHOP The pattern helps Alonzo decide the length of her necklaces.

ALONZO mentioned the metal clasp/codura chain of the seed pearls. The chains add contrast.

CHOKER with coral and pearls, with matching earrings.

PEARLS and rainbows, for the fragrant born

Around sales, bought from her. "But she said, 'I'm not patronizing you, I'm treating because I like it,'" Balakrishnan says proud.

And it's not just Alonzo's close acquaintances who have come to appreciate her works. Ayala Museum's gift shop used the Filipino Heritage Library more as it's her necklaces.

"It's flattering, chilling, surprising," she says.

Alonzo's designs are common, not fine jewelry. She loves working with inexpensive, casual and pearls, as well as shells. Her favorite piece is a pearl necklace, accented by each coral. It has a large silver line, with stone pearls hanging from its branches (an added touch by Alonzo), as pendant.

"I fell in love with this one because I knew it was very versatile, and such [necklaces] I would make with it would be different," Alonzo says. The piece is to add something different to her design. Most of her pendants are from Boracay, where her son runs Iloan Alonzo has two children and three grandchildren, all in the US, where she visits at least three times a year.

Her other materials are keepsakes from her travels to India, Bangkok, Africa, necklaces and loose stones Alonzo says she bought without really knowing why—they were "just pretty." She adds has local suppliers, whom she came to work with through CITC.

Though her main creations are neck pieces, Alonzo sometimes couples her works with a pair of earrings, if the finished piece is appropriate.

Her design inspiration comes from a session called "Innovera" at the 33 Cuero Inglot store in Spain, where she spent some time studying where she was 18 or 19.

"The basic foundation [of bracelets] is fitting," Where I go there, I feel so happy, they have such beautiful pieces."

Alonzo's workshop is a small room in her house. Scattered on her work table is a colorful mix of stones, pearls, chains, pendants. A workbench partner helps her decide the length of her pieces. Her favorite tool is her lighted magnifying glass.

Alonzo also weighs her pieces: Basic is 150 g, so be sure that the piece will still sit comfortably on one's neck. She's also careful in her works affordable enough for the usual working Filipina, something they can splurge on while still within budget. (Call 09165003160 for the complete price range.)

Advocacy

Somehow, Alonzo says, she's coming up what she had advocated when she was Department of Trade undersecretary for small-medium enterprises development, for people to put up their own businesses.

"I'm starting myself as 'art-preneur,'" Alonzo says.

There are days when she feels so inspired that she finishes one necklace after another. And then there are times when she can't even finish one piece in a day, because when it doesn't feel or look right, Alonzo doesn't mind undoing and redoing what she's finished, and when orders pile up, two customers help her out. She escapes to Chez Tapestry home store in a while, when she needs a spark of inspiration.

She's currently aggressively market her necklaces; she credits the popularity of her pieces mostly to word-of-mouth. Her works will savvy her smile, Mel Alonzo, as the brand. She's also taken care of the packaging, considering her environmental impact by using small cotton bags.

"It wasn't meant to be a business," says Alonzo. "But it has its own life now. I've been happily surprised at the reception of my necklaces."

Natori launches swimwear and home accessories

From page F1

Intimates expertise to explore the realm of lingerie with bold colors, prints, embroidery and appliqué. Decades later, the Natori brand is now present in ready-to-wear, fragrance, linens, jewelry, eyewear and accessories.

A risky move, one would say of entering such a crowded markets, but one that seems to be paying off well. In the fashion industry, where many aspiring designers begin with exclusive designer lines before going mass, the Natoris still count on their intimates background to give them an advantage.

Switching careers

"It was good that I wasn't just a designer," says Josie, who was from stockbroker to eyewear, then to investment banking at Merrill Lynch before switching careers.

"I started a business with an understanding of basic business principles, economics and cash flow. I don't know how anyone can survive without that," she says.

Starting to gather as a family, a unique situation that wouldn't work for everyone seems to be helpful for the company, as well.

Ken, who is the company president, handles operations and licensing, while Josie, as the CEO, handles the more creative aspects of the business. Her son, Kenneth Jr., who also worked at Wall Street until 2007, is vice president of finance and oversees the Natori e-commerce site.

Despite tough times during the recession, Kenneth says company sales are recovering, and even more so for online shopping.

"Our online sales have been the most after year. We are pleased with how the site is now with it as we grow but we also promote over the years," he says.

Partnering with Bergo International, the company's recently renovated its wintercorset store now offers workbooks, including the Philippines. The company is embracing all the bet has to offer, collaborating with blogger Kelly Framel of www.glamorous.com, and even hosting an intimate event in their New York home for bloggers.

She's quick to point out that blogs and Twitter "are not for" Josie but @JosieNatori have changed the field drastically.

"The competition may be tough, but I also love the challenge of figuring out ways to connect with customers and find new opportunities for our brand," she adds.

Eclectic line

Aside from a new site of Natori's affiliate line, Josie, a more eclectic line geared toward the younger mother, you can expect new products this year such as swimwear and home accessories.

Working with current licensing companies for their products, the Natoris spent years honing their approach before launching products over to an outside company.

The Natoris keep a close eye on their licensed products, overseeing design and sales.

"The most important thing we have to franchise is our name, and we protect it at all costs," says Josie. Her recent post in Twitter says they are almost ready to launch their home accessories line of keys, boxes and frames, the first step in establishing a full range of furniture, rugs and tableware.

It's all part of an orderly expansion plan, she says.

"Everything we do connects. Ready-to-wear, lingerie, purse options, maybe—it's about a person's wardrobe, and we are going to keep adding layers. It's about a total lifestyle concept," she adds.

Though the swimwear and home accessories lines have yet to be launched, you can expect the same East-West aesthetic that the brand has become famous for.

"Our swimwear will have our signature bold colors and prints, while our home accessories will be mostly in black lacquer," says Josie.

Having being featured recently in The New York Times (they documented her furniture-shopping trip as well as her homework list), she is quite happy with what her company has accomplished so far.

"Because it wasn't born into this business, I look at things differently. I just do what feels natural, and that's how we grow. Sentiment for the concerns, but sales? Maybe not," she says.

Looking some of her Fall/Winter 2011 collection photos on the Net, her pieces have retained this edgier design—without sacrificing the Natori signature aesthetic, such as draped harnesses, dramatic wool leathers were inspired by natural scenes. As she mentions in the Natori website, "I just happened to start at the back door with lingerie. Now is the company grown, we grow one sensibility too, taking our concept and making it a whole world."

Being in fashion is tough, she says, as is desire in this economic mess, "we must work harder to make our customers feel they must buy what we are offering."

JOSIE Natori (in a Natori knit print dress and coat) and son Kenneth Jr.

LUXURY IN MINIATURE embroidery

NATORI swimwear and sunglasses

Vanity Basket

New foundation and moisturizer in one

Many Japanese women swear by the new BB Cream, a tinted moisturizer that promises to heal and at the same time. Originally a German skincare invention, the cream also protects skin from the sun's harmful rays and provides makeup coverage, leading to softer, smoother and more refined skin. Instantly tone and wrinkle and skin-lightening benefits. The new cream is now available at Beauty and Boutique branches at 2/F SM San Lazaro, tel. 7637358; 3/F, Entertainment Wing, SM Mall of Asia, 5566000; 4/F, SM Mega mall Annex, 6704258.

Face luminizer

Make Up For Ever's Uplight product proves the face a natural and glamorous finish. Whether it is makeup for a photoshoot or an event, Uplight helps achieve a natural healthy look. It's used to remove effect on and cheek. Uplight is a face luminizer gel that has multi-reflective pearls and is made of over 75 percent water. Its texture offers a fresh and light looking on the skin. Thanks to its gel texture, it can be applied easily on the skin alone or mixed into a foundation for an even and radiant look. Daisy Sanz creates looks inspired by Andy Warhol using the new Uplight, which comes in eight shades and from different finishing effects, such as subtle pearly and sparkling. The colors are divided into cool (Pearly white, Sparkling Blue Pink, Dewy Pink Beige, Pearly Pink Pearly) and warm (Dewy Golden Warm, Sparkling Golden Pink, Pearly Golden Peach, Sparkling Golden Copper).

Dry-touch, long-lasting sunblock

Neutrogena's Ultra Sheer Complete UV Wet-Resistant Lotion with SPF 60+ and Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock gives maximum protection against the sun's burning rays. The latest word and technology behind this product is Helioplex, a breakthrough patented ingredient that gives outstanding lasting protection against the sun's UVA and UVB rays. Helioplex was formulated because most sunblocks contain ingredients that actually break down and lose effectiveness once exposed to the sun. Helioplex, in contrast, keeps the key ingredients of the sunblock intact even after long exposure. This means less need for reapplications and more effective sun protection.

Natural, no-colorant hand sanitizer, lip balm

Nails A Passion hand sanitizer is made of 99 percent naturally derived ingredients. It's 70 percent plant-derived alcohol, a biodegradable formula and with no colorants. The 45 ml bottle with pump comes in two fragrances: Field Berries, Energy Fruits, Grapefruit Guava, Orange Carnation, Pear Peony.

Fruity Collection lip balms, meanwhile, combine shimmering gloss with moisturizing balm to leave lips radiant, delicately colored and gently hydrated. Ingredients include natural oil which hydrates as it glosses, and sunflower oil.

FROM left: Maurizio Galante haute couture and Mahon Martin Margiela couture 2011 collection

From Dior's red to Gaultier's 'punk cancan,' and Margiela's artisanal flowers

Tulle, capes, feathers, flowers—the collections showcased each designer's down-to-earth directions

ELIE Saab collection

By Rio de Ocs Jr.
Contributor

Dior

PARIS—THERE was anticipation in the air, and then we awoke before the shutterbees' words sprouted by its former designer. The gleaming "Dior" at the end of the long runway in the makeshift tent gave us hint of what was to come.

Even with the drama of the color red for the first few looks—perfectly fitted pencil skirts and fantastic tulle blazers—in the end, it would be all about form, exquisite boning and the play of colors.

Most represented glamour followed the red ensembles. The evening dresses were mysterious in workmanship. Elegance reigned in the dazzling display of looks fit for a princess. Each gorgeous look displayed the spirit of the kind of woman who dressed for fashion's sake—to be beautiful, and nothing less.

Tulle was arranged around silk in such a way that it was difficult to see where the degradé began and ended. The eyes were drawn instead to the line of the dress, and to the shadows that made each voluminous piece seem even larger than it already was.

The press dossier read, "This season Dior Haute Couture is inspired by the work of iconic illustrator René Gruau. A draped of tulles wash from light to dark, as painterly techniques in sheer silk organza to bold silk taffeta evoke the intensity and depth of an illustrator's gouache palette."

Jean Paul Gaultier

The show's theme was "punk cancan," but the only overtly visible "punk" details were from the mesh up and the headless shows: mohawks and fishnet stockings. Clothes were more baroque than punk, save for the occasional spiked necklace; a patchwork leather jacket was elegant and sharply tailored, as they all were.

Black, with the occasional bold color palette, was aplenty. The ensembles of solid colors, from shirt, gave little hint of the details seen up close: perfectly the pleats on a white blouse or a black dress, intricate beading on maroon skirt, or an exquisite tulle dress.

The dresses were slim. An almost-like knee length of light blue and red chiffon cut and gathered like think petal clusters, one color around the bodice after another, remained restrained and elegant, while an ivory encircled dress contrasting the body displayed trademark Gaultier confidence and sensuality.

Mauricio Galante

The pointed legs and faces remained one of Galante. The clothes were not ostentatious couture; the sweater kind that would require translation into a client's specific needs and wants.

Colors were bright and brighter, but the clothes themselves displayed several techniques: various kinds of pleating, and silhouettes of roomier jackets with a cape-like feel and volume to create a kind of sweet of inspiration.

There were nine dresses with an orderly, if somewhat uninspired feel: squares of runway at once together to create an amour like feel.

Accessories included large feathery which, combined with the makeup, transformed the woman into another creature—a bird about to take flight, or a beautiful warrior in a post-apocalypse world. In this fantastic reality, street definitions were blurred, and the woman instead was a creature to represent all conclusions.

Maison Martin Margiela

What is Maison Martin Margiela if not the conceptual transformed into something more familiar, or perhaps the familiar turned conceptual? Through the years we have seen the couture techniques that the Maison has used to create clothing and retail spaces to cleverly deliver who it is—a pioneer of linking modern art with fashion, to create a generation of designers.

Contrast, a specialty of the House, again demonstrated one of the house's approaches of using everyday materials to make something new.

It can sound to be ironic, they could simply describe it as took unused men's neckties, dozens of, all, pieces reworked from various materials gathered by the house over the years. Looking beyond and within, however, one would find the artisanal aspects in which the house knew the touch of years of experience, can be seen.

The press dossier states: "This season, Artisanal" is inspired by flowers, being a print, a color, a shape or a concept. The front of each piece is specifically crafted, as opposed to its simple back."

The "inspiration" was literal, and in one particularly vibrant jacket, there was an assembly of gerbera on an oversized collar.

One could imagine the hours of labor that had gone into its creation (URL to list exact), but one could also see such meticulous detail in what looked like a very lush, compressed rose garden.

Something akin to a cyberpunk-post story—an unbridled floral dress—was made of sequins "cut out of colored plastic bags to reproduce and continue the spirit of a vintage cocktail dress turned into an evening gown" and made of polyester bows, stretch satin and elastic.

The final piece was a plastic dress—a plastic window in the once used to wrap school textbooks—called polyethelene, or tissue-type paper. The dress was stapled together and hung on the body like a toga, one-shoulder raincoat. One might wonder who would wear such a thing, or when it comes to this brand, why the lines are often so strictly defined.

Elie Saab

Among the brand mentioned is "Gossip Girl" by character Lily Humphrey added to the kind of clientele the brand tries to go for, and the aesthetics it stands by. Elie Saab conveys, which the press dossier describes as being for "a woman of both character and fragility, the divine—and asserts herself," had looked splashy for the Upper East Siders of this world.

A tent pink gown was made of yards of layered floral chiffon, with an opening in the front to make way for the legs as one walked, the fabric flowers at the shoulder casually dangling down the back. It was the understated version of a two-piece princess dress, its silhouette lean and loose material. A lace jacket swung to the back as the model walked, its equally pretty matching lace dress swinging daintily below the knees.

The dossier noted: "In contrast, a black evening gown entirely embroidered in black crepe features a bustier shirred open with a deep cowl-like cut, and closes the silhouette with a striking trail. It evokes the controversial glamour that lies at the heart of the collection," perhaps more than glamour, such look portrayed only the genius, the appropriate, and the very la-di-da.

ELIE Saab collection

YOHJI'S evening beauties. A pair of layered silk chiffon and matt satin sheer-vest leggings and flat boots. Floral photograph in the only dress.

CLASSIC Yamamoto. His favorite silhouette of an 18th-century hoop skirt marries with the sensibilities of the present. Here is a suit in an ultra-drab felted wool jacket and matching skirt, patterned leggings and high biker boots.

RED like the Japanese flag. Designer Yohji Yamamoto shows a red sculpted cashmere long coat over matching silk chiffon tunic and lace-like mesh leggings. Shoes are red patent leather lace-up boots.

Yohji Yamamoto rocks

CUBISM

OP ART. Dai Fujiwara for Issey Miyake presented this jacket that evokes Cubism as well as an optical illusion are plays. The mid-tunic is paired with drapey pants and jumpsuit platforms from the Autumn/Winter Paris Week for 2011-2012.

By Larry Levien
Cover Source

The Japanese designer is marking 30 years in fashion with a London exhibit. He and other Japanese designers have been rolling out global fashion trends since 1981

YOHJI Yamamoto was in the UK during the devastating earthquake in Japan. The 68-year-old Japanese designer was there to open an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London so much his 30th year in fashion. Take note: It was not a retrospective but an exhibition, like it shows how seminal Yamamoto's influence has been on global fashion.

"Happy birthday to my mom," said the maverick designer to his models. He was paying tribute to the woman who taught him the sober etiquette of draping and tailoring, qualities that have distinguished his designs.

The visionary has hooked up with lady love Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons. They now have a love child, Limi Feu.

The two Japanese designers have been wowing Paris Fashion Week and rolling the runways with their counterparts Issey Miyake and Junya Watanabe.

In 1981, these fiercely original Japanese designers took Paris by storm by turning out what enraged fashion critics called 18-rendition Chic, clothes that were asymmetric, deconstructed and always black. But regardless and flashy unfazed, the designs became an instant hit with the younger fashion pack.

It was the height of extreme snobbery. Although the designs made women resemble a long lady able to blend in and not get mugged in any city in the world, they pointed to the future of design.

Today we celebrate those fierce originals and the trends they have mapped out for the winner of 2012. Indeed if the Mayan prophecy and other doomsday projections foretell catastrophic events happening 12 minutes before midnight on Dec. 21, 2012, no one all more our apprehensive with death, destruction and destiny wearing only the finest Paris style designed for the special salons of our discussion. We may dress in those trendy looks and go out in a blaze of glory. Those selected numbers will be perfect and on cue.

Meanwhile, some questions about Paris Fashion Week. Is Karl Lagerfeld losing his grip in Chanel with a collection that's showy, goth and grungy? Has designer Sarah Burton resurrected Alexander McQueen?

JUNYA WATANABE

Black pantsuit has a vest with pointed reflected collar paired with egg-shaped skirt.

FROM left, Junya Watanabe's draped tote black dress in leather; Dai Fujiwara for Issey Miyake designed this organic mini-suit that has a leather egg skirt and drawstring vest; the latter's suit—Junya Watanabe's modern take on pin skirt suit in brown herringbone leather.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernie G. Velarde

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Fun talk with David and Lea

DAVID Pomeranz and Lea Salonga team up for a concert on March 29 at the Resorts World Manila.

By Pocholo Concepcion

IT'S ALWAYS fun to interview intelligent artists. Two fine examples are David Pomeranz and Lea Salonga, who are teaming up for a concert on March 29 at the Newport Performing Arts Theater of Resorts World Manila.

Salonga needs no introduction. But Pomeranz's viewers changed our notion that he's lucky (corny) as some of his romantic ballads attest. Read on.

David Pomeranz

What keeps you busy lately?

I am composing music and rehearsing for two new Broadway-based stage musicals and performing my "Charlie Chaplin" one-man show across the United States.

TAKE FIVE

Are you in touch with the current music scene? Who impresses you most among the new crop of performers?

Yes, I am. I am very impressed by some of the better singers and writers like Jason Mraz and Lady Antebellum. I also like Katy Perry's recent records. I'm a simple guy. I like great songs and the singers who sing the hell out of them. I think Michael Bublé has the best musical chops and Kelly Clarkson has the best female's.

What do you think is right and wrong about the music business today?

I think what is right is that there are lots of new people coming up that are genuinely talented and getting a shot—either through traditional channels like major labels or the indie route of going directly to the public. This is the first time in history where artists can achieve great success without needing the major labels to promote them. The bad news is, the working standards could be higher in my opinion.

Let's go back to your early days as a songwriter. What was your first big hit and what did you do with your first royalty check?

My first big hit was Barry Manilow's version of my song "Tryin' To Get the Feeling Again." I took my first royalty check and bought a beautiful house in Malibu. Two weeks later, the guest house and all the grounds burned down from a raging brush fire. Must be a lesson in there somewhere though I'm not sure what it is!

Are you an artist who doesn't have to perform all the time because you live comfortably off royalties from publishing and other rights?

No, I perform all the time because I love it. I travel the world extensively and the only downside is not being with my wife and 9-year-old son as much as I want to. Otherwise, I'm happiest on stage, in the "zone" with the audience and singing at my best. Not much in life beats that for me.

What is more effective when writing love songs—when you're happy or sad?

I can write either way. But I don't think one has to be chronically sad to write a sad song. I

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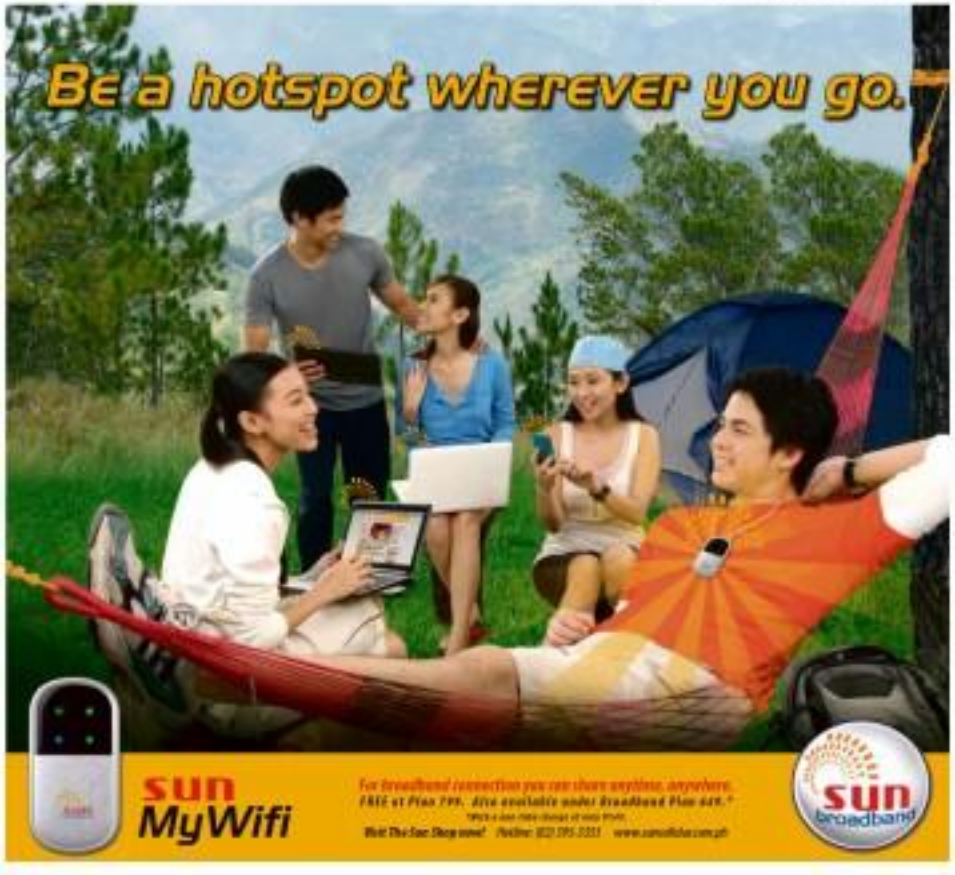

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Nickelodeon counts down to Earth Hour

NICKELODEON WILL be running those in Earth Hour with two friendly episodes in support of the annual global "lights out" movement on March 26.

Green-themed messages will also be aimed to encourage kids to lead the way in making positive change and remind them that no one is too small to make a big difference in saving planet Earth.

Earth Hour specials begin at 3:30 p.m. with the "Go, Diego, Go!" episode "Ocean Animal Rescues," where Rescue Dolphin needs help after an oceanic oil spill. "The SpongeBob SquarePants" episode "Krazy Eights Battleship Beautiful" follows at 4:30 p.m., where Squidward cleans up garbage and does community service after being caught littering.

Other special episodes include: "Huggwood Heroes" ("Team Umizoomi"), 5:30 p.m.; "Handyman" ("Yo Gabba Gabba!"), 6:30 p.m.; "Mixed-Up Seasons" ("Dora the Explorer"), 7:30 p.m.; "Lights Out" ("The Fairly Odd Parents"), 8:30 p.m.

Nickelodeon's "Nickelodeon" star Victoria Justice will also be offering educational tips on recycling and energy conservation on specs on March 26.

"SPONGEBOB SquarePants"

Unfinished business

Mel and Mike White became the second team to be eliminated from "The Amazing Race: Unfinished Business" after the frigid weather took a toll on the father and son bonding for sitting in a pile of mud.

Former NFL cheerleaders Jaime and Cara didn't notice that Mel and Mike sought refuge in a van and were surprised when they learned that they finished ninth.

Nine remaining fan-favorite teams from previous seasons will travel to China from Japan. One team will make a final mistake. Will it cost them the second chance to win $1 million on the race around the world? The show airs Tuesdays, 9-10 p.m. on Fridays 15.

"DORA the Explorer"

Tsunami crisis line

ABS-CBN has put up the Kapamilya Help line for those who need assistance in contacting their loved ones in Japan after the devastating earthquake and tsunami that struck the country.

A group of social workers from ABS-CBN Foundation handles calls and provide advice concerning while employee-volunteers monitor the message boards online.

Volunteers contact the callers' loved ones to check on their condition and update their relatives in the Philippines.

In case of failure to communicate, they forward the information to the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Embassy in Japan.

The Kapamilya Help-lines are 411-0001 and 411-0002. The website is www.abs-cbn.com/kapamilya-helpline.

Earthquake alert

GMA News and Public Affairs launches the "I'M Ready: Alerto sa Lindol" series of plugs and reports on its newscasts beginning this week.

"I'M READY" is an interactive, multi-media campaign that urges the public to be prepared for any emergency situation.

The plugs share some tips on what to do before, during and after an earthquake gathered from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The public may also send their own tips and video entries through GMA Kapuso Twitter account @addchips, Pinoy-model and Facebook page (www.gmanews.tv).

The campaign also has a web counterpart via www.gmanews.tv/imready.

Shocking revelation

A housewife reveals something from her past while a doctor learns something that will totally change her future.

Big revelations are expected this on March 24 on the back-to-back airing of "Desperate Housewives" and "Grey's Anatomy" on Studio 23.

On Wisteria Lane, Gabrielle Solis (Eva Longoria) gets to cross paths with someone she remains none about for years, and whom she considers a big part of her life.

Meanwhile, on Seattle Grace, Meredith (Ellen Pompeo) finds out about her condition that might change the way things are between her and Derek (Patrick Dempsey).

"Desperate Housewives" airs at 10:30 p.m. followed by "Grey's Anatomy" at 11:30 p.m.

Celebrity news

Television's newest chat-news program "Ka-ma," now on its 17th streaming brings a hip and fresh spin to the latest celebrity stories from Tinseltown on Saturdays at 10 p.m. on ETC in 30% Jabo seen on Sky Cable Ch. 14, Destiny Cable Ch. 54, Cable Link Ch. 11 and Digital Ch. 34.1

MARIO Lopez

Shot on location at The resorts in Las Angeles, the show has host Mario Lopez reporting in front of a live audience and taking viewers room to room with reports from Kim's correspondents in Las Vegas and New York.

The show's signature segments include GPS (Great Pic of Stars), Bumper Control and Life Changers.

French action

Star Movies features the 2009 French action film "Banlieue 13: Ultimatum," a sequel to the 2004 release "Banlieue 13," on March 20 at 9 p.m.

Its partners police officer Damien (Cyril Raffaelli) and reformed ciphatin Leito (David Belle) team up anew to save the notorious, ghetto-populated District 13 from corrupt and greedy cops and officials.

MEL and Mike White

ELLEN Pompeo in "Grey's Anatomy"

Fun talk with David and Lea

From page 8A

just "call it up"—from memory, too, and get into that frame of mind at will. It certainly helps to experience it directly while it's being written, but once the song's done, I'm onto the next thing. I don't get stuck in the emotional experience. I may portray it that way on and off, I think. I'm in my here extensively here, over, when I'm feeling well and wrong and just allow myself to be "moved" by whatever experience befalls me (inspiration is

DAVID Pomeranz: "I don't think one has to be chronically sad to write a sad song."

always key. I try to never write something fake or outside of my own experiences because this is some can pick it up a mile away.

Name three songs that you wished you could've written.

"These Dreams" by Heart, "You'll Never Walk Alone" by Rodgers and Hammerstein, and "The Longest Time" by Billy Joel.

How are you preparing for your show with Lea Salonga?

By finding songs to sing that move each of us personally and deeply. I believe that's what will move the audience and that is our most important target. Of course, the other part is to learn, rehearse, rehearse!

I haven't seen anything lately that I remember. Am looking forward to seeing "Rent" in Montreal though. Two really good friends, Maurice Lauzhergues and Jeri Sheppeck, are the leads, and anything they do is just wicked awesome. I love them both dearly as performers and as people.

Let's go back to your early days as a performer. What really motivated you to become an artiste?

I really don't know. I never had that classic all-angels epiphany where I announced to my family, "I wanna be an artist!" All of this seemed natural and easy, flowing without any opposition. However, my family stressed the importance of getting an education as I tried my best to keep up with my schoolwork.

Perhaps motivation wasn't an all-encompassing thing, but more ease-in-ease. For example, my mom threatened to keep me home from school if I didn't finish my homework. That'll light a fire under my butt. For sure.

What kind of setback have you experienced in your career and how did you deal with it?

I don't know if I could call this a setback, but whenever I regret, since a lack of professionalism at work, that irks me. It sometimes makes me want to quit or kill somebody, usually the offending party, but my love for performing always wins out and I keep on. And I haven't gone homicidal yet. (Insert evil laughter here.)

What's the most rewarding part of your stint in local show biz?

The work for sure, and the people I've met and have gotten to work with. There are tons of undeniables, but cause you have been to separate the woods from the chaff, it's mostly smiling and fantastic. The best, nice though are the "old school" theater people who are incredibly classy, love their work, and are funny as hell.

Did you ever get affected by international fame in a negative way?

Can't say that I have. I'm thankful for it.

Who's your greatest influence as a singer?

There are actually quite a few: Karen Carpenter, Ella Fitzgerald, Gloria Newman-Arden, Diana Ossmond, Barbra Streisand. The lyrics are always closely interpreted, they all know how to tell a good story. I still listen to the radio to keep from hangout, but they old or unsure. There's always something to learn.

Have you tried writing lyrics for a future record?

For some reason my brain isn't wired to write lyrics. I can write a two-page column without any problem, but lyrics stump me. That takes something special. Perhaps I just need some encouragement, or a writing partner.

How are you preparing for your show with David Pomeranz?

I've got rehearsal recordings on my laptop and iPhone, but since I'm still in mid-tour I haven't done them yet. I'll start listening down a week before the show to keep things fresh in my head.

Are you singing new songs for the show?

Well, the songs aren't all new, but they'll be new to me!

Cartoon Network's Silas Hickey scouts Filipino talents

CHEEK FACTOR

By Allan Policarpio
Contributor

NEW CARTOON hits made in the Philippines? That's not a far-fetched scenario, says Cartoon Network Asia Pacific branch creative director Silas Hickey.

He believes that the country — which currently provides animation services for Cartoon Network — could be more than just an outsourcing destination.

"For the first time in the history of the company, we'll be making projects in Asia that have export potential not just within the region, but also in the US and in Europe. We're open to co-producing with local studios," Hickey said.

The executive was in Manila recently to recruit for animation talents. One of her driving forces behind his visit was the show of impressive submissions and pitches they received from Filipinos for Cartoon Network's 2008 talent search, "Short Now Asia Pacific Cartoons (Imagination)."

Hickey, who is based in Hong Kong, said that co-producing with the Philippines is a very exciting prospect from a geographical and practical point of view.

But more than the technical expertise, what Hickey looks for in an animation studio is the ability to match multi-national experience, and provide creative dimensions to potential projects or properties.

"We've always had remarkable appetite for making new stuff, so they also need to be good storytellers," he said.

Original stories and characters

Aside from animation artists and studios, Hickey was also looking for writers and directors who can give original and compelling stories, which he can adapt into animated productions. It would be a big plus, though, if he could find everyone under the same roof.

"I usually team up different studios or people for a project, but it would be tough hence if there's someone who can do it all," he said.

Hickey admitted that finding good stories is the most taxing aspect as a creative director. "If it was easy, we should be seeing a lot more hit shows coming out frequently. And you don't."

He pointed out that "if the story is really interesting, people will still watch it even if the animation is quite crappy. I've seen some really badly executed stuff, but have great stories."

For the Asia-Pacific region, Hickey leans more towards producing action-adventure and slapstick comedies.

"In Asia, more so than the Middle East or Latin America, we've got such a wide variety of languages. That's why we're more interested in physical humor because it translates so easily. Something in the same vein as 'Tom and Jerry,'" he explained.

But whatever the genre may be, one thing should be consistent with all the pitches and story proposals, he said. They should be character-driven.

"We're more about having inspiring, strong characters that are beautifully designed. It should be the choices that the characters make and the things that happen to them that advance the story, rather than a succession of events solely through a series of big action sequences," he said.

A good example, Hickey said, would be "Johnny Bravo" who, despite seeing himself as God's gift to women, could not attract any. Unbridging mustache and status wraps holds the fact that he's a one big mama's boy. Created by H. Ani animator Van Partible, "Johnny Bravo" is said to be one of the most successful and iconic Cartoon Network series ever.

Although Hickey didn't want to disclose the animation studios in his agenda, he said that he doesn't have a quota on how many he will hire. "If we find 20 amazing studios, then great," he said.

Contemporizing local tales

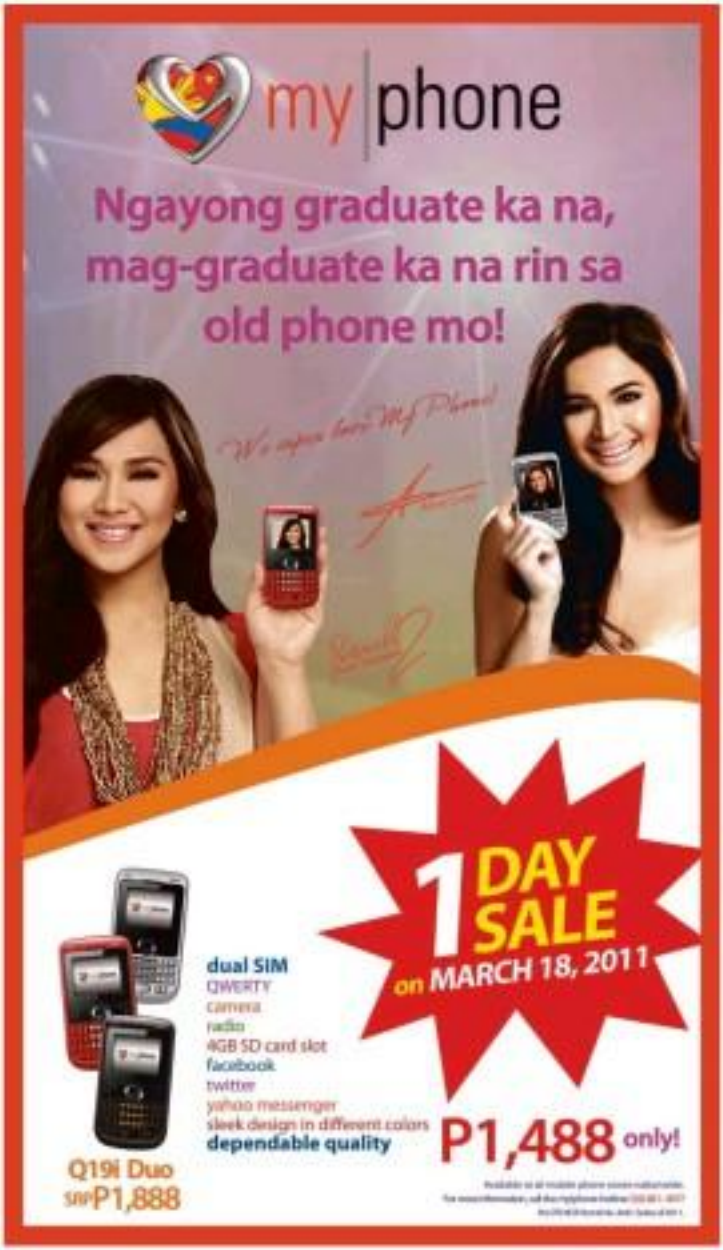
Wherever Hickey travels, he checks out the local bookstores for fresh ideas. He expressed interest in contemporizing Filipino tales and folklores such as the "Ibong Adarna" and "Juan Tamad."

Given the right material, he said that he could give our local tales the same kind of treatment and twist he gave "Hoff No. 23," which was based on the Indian literary epic "Mahabharata."

"We're very culturally-sensitive with that approach. We worked with Indian writers to see issues here for we can push the series. And if we find interesting Filipino stories, we'll be working with Filipino creators and writers as well," he said.

On his next visit to the country, Hickey wants to do a more thorough research about our local comic book industry, to see if we have some series or characters worth reinventing.

"We're really hoping that we meet some of these Filipino comic book artists. And if we find them, it'll jump on the opportunity to [illegible] months into and more," he said.



ENTERTAINMENT

Celebrities as talent competition jurors

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WAS IT "American Idol" that started it all? Time was when judges for TV talent competitions were chosen for their expertise, perceptiveness, objectivity and good judgment. But ever since shows like AI made its celebrity jurors part of the entertainment with their quirky, subjective and idiosyncratic comments, the situation has deteriorated.

Those days, yes, simply aren't ours if jurors' verdicts can be relied upon to spot the next authentic talent who deserves to become a star, or are being evaluated by expressed to further the jurist's own career and reputation for being prickly quotable and controversial.

On the local talent tilt front, the situation has deteriorated even further, because some so-called jurors are obviously chosen, not for their discernment, but for their face, name, or "shock" value. So, is it any wonder if they behave accordingly?

It really is quite galling to see some "stars" and "singers" who are notorious for being dull or clumsy-tight hosty performers usually passing judgment on poor contestants who are better actors and singers than they are.

And yet, the "celebrity" jurors do so with impunity, because they were chosen by producers people who apparently have a low regard for both contestants and viewers.

Well, if they treat us with such lack of respect, we certainly can't be blamed for disrespecting them in turn.

Of course, the most productive focus of disrespect we could engage in would be to stop viewing their shows, in the hope that poor ratings will eventually knock some sense into their heads.

In some tacky and juror-compromised talent tilts, the celebrity judges even come up with little performances of their own—to their abject embarrassment. (If they are aware enough to be embarrassed.)

The saddest shows of all are the ones that misguidedly give viewers the "power" to vote unpopular or "non-hosts" jurors out. Whatever has possessed these so-called celebrity judges to agree to being humiliated in this insidious way? Well, since they think so little of themselves, they deserved to be treated shabbily.

In the entire history of judging, jurors have never been voted out. By trust us in our quirky little corner of the entertainment universe to have such low regard for standards, that we have come up with this bizarre wrinkle to the already cramped labors of local showbiz.

How in sin example (his ad scenario) judges of talent who should be chosen for their expertise and objectivity, period, so that the right and most deserving talents are chosen.

Jurors shouldn't be required to provide the entertainment, that's the contestant's job.

And judges should never, ever agree to be voted out. That's their function, power and responsibility.

That's the bottom line.

The Opera Belles' musical influences include Luciano Pavaroti, Charlotte Church, Josh Groban, Sarah Brightman and Michael Bublé

Madonna with a classical twist

Text and photos by Allan Policarpio
Contributor

THE OPERA Belles is a group that's out to prove that classical music is not simply traditional, boring, elitist or only for your grandparents.

Composed of young, classically trained singers Allison Tanner, Lara Maigue, and Jem Valdez, the Opera Belles believes that music lovers shouldn't have themselves to pop, rock, R&B, jazz or hip-hop. "We're here to show people that we can sing Madonna with a classical twist and it would still sound awesome," the trio said during its album launch at the Eastwood Mall Open Park recently.

Before being signed by Sony Music last year, the Opera Belles—self-confessed influences include Luciano Pavarotti, Charlotte Church, Josh Groban, Sarah Brightman and Michael Bublé—underwent rigid training and auditions with the Philippine Opera Company.

As the album launch, the Opera Belles gave various onlookers a refreshing take on pop and R&B favorites such as Taylor Swift's "Love Story" and Jessie's "Officially Missing You"—heart-pounding operatic elements and rhythmic changes in the songs.

Showcasing its versatility as performers, the group dressed to show upbeat members like The Gorp "Breathless."

But the Opera Belles shined best in "papuri" singles "The Jesus" and Frank Sinatra's "My Way." Tanner's "The Jesus" showcased gospel in area as Allison, Lara, and Jem effortlessly handled the songs' demanding passages, surfacing the air with their sweet, almost ethereal notes.

THE OPERA BELLES (from L): Lara Maigue, Jem Valdez, Allison Tanner

THE GROUP transcribes the Philippine Opera Company.

Like apples and oranges

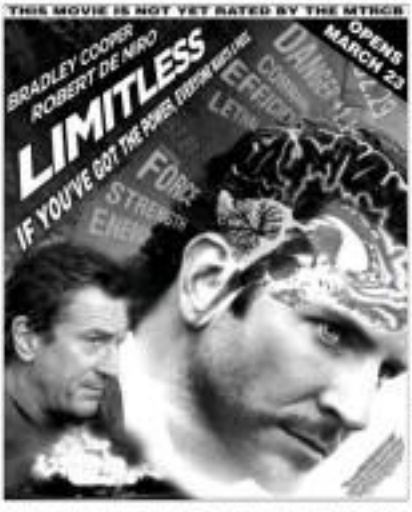
Airing a gal mix, comparisons with La Diva are inevitable, but unlike Jessalyn Gilsig, Aurelle Sanson, and Marinette Garcia—all known for their exceptional belting prowess—the Opera Belles employs a higher vocal technique to reaching high notes. Likewise, more focus is given to harmony.

"We have our own thing, they have their own thing. We're different. It's like apples and oranges. But we feel La Diva super galing. So is any female classic band in Manila," said Maigue.

The Opera Belles' self-titled debut album on Sony Music boasts a mix of old and recent music masterpieces including "Love Story" (Taylor Swift), "The Only Exception" (Paramore), "Breathless" (The Corrs), "Memory" (Bryan Adams), "Songs With Borrowed" (Chris Anne), "Like A Prayer" (Madonna), "Only Hope" (Mandy Moore), "Bicu" (Tina Arena), "Officially Missing You" (Tamia), "I Turn To You" (Christina Aguilera), and the current single, "Smile" (Imagen).

The reason for the album's lack of original and operatic compositions, said Jem, is to make the music more accessible to a wider audience. "The album is an introduction," she explained. "We chose pop songs so that the listeners won't be alienated, and be close to be familiar with our sound."

However, the Opera Belles recognizes the need to have original material in the future. "We're all planning to write our own songs together. We know that we just can't keep on rewising songs throughout our careers," said the trio.



Remembering Lola Sisang

from page 61

from my own company, the (Superstar) artistical service."

Jed Jed said that Dolla Sisang taught her the importance of being chubby around.

"Dolla Sisang told me that I should start rewapping, even the ribbons tied around girls because I could wear them," Del Jed said.

Lilia Dizon, who was last active in the 1984 Cannibalist Film Pete for Lamberto Avellana's "Sandiliang Pilak," described Dolla Sisang as a no-nonsense entrepreneur who was ahead of her time.

"If she didn't like something, she would not hesitate to say it," Dizon remarked. "She was very intuitive. As a producer, she was generous. Our lives improved because of her."

Like a second mother

Dolla Rosica, another D/B star, recounted that Dolla Sisang was strict and persistent, like any mother.

One time, Rosica cut her hair short, in view to the trend in the 1960s. Dolla Sisang saw red and demanded that the actress change her hairstyle, pronto!

"She was like a second mother to me and Susan. Since I lived alone in Manila, she insisted that I have a live-in. Aside from the studio so that I'll be near her. She was protective and caring. I miss her terribly."

Dolla Sisang died at age 88 in February 1986.

Dolla recalled that Dolla Sisang was the studio's like a household and was a multitasker long before the term was invented.

"She ran the studio and supervised the kitchen at the same time," Dolla said.

"She enjoyed cooking. She also liked to sew and designed many costumes before hiring a professional stylist," Dolla said.

Also regarded as one of the top film companies in the country, D/B officially closed shop six years ago with the sale of its post-production facilities to Unitel Television.

"Times have changed," Escalante said. "No one in the family wanted to continue. It was better to have one gracefully."

The D/B heirs have deposited the studio's surviving titles (around 100) to the ABS-CBN Archives and the memorabilia to the Lopez Museum.

"We want future generations of the Philippines and film scholars to know about Lola Sisang's contributions to local cinema," Dolla said.

Dolla Sisang, with the help of son Ahmee de Leon, produced acclaimed screen gems of the Best Golden Age—Lamberto Avellana's "Anak Dalita" and Gerardo "Manuel Conde" Negrete's "Ang Lahat"—which won awards at the Asian Film Festival in the 1950s.

The country's first color film, "Ibong Adarna" (1941), was produced by D/B in 1949.

According to the book "Dolla Sisang and Filipino Movies," the producer also encouraged director Sidor (later known as Lieutenant Colonel) Gerardo de Leon to make that first color feature in 1948.

Apart from its priceless library of vintage movies, yet another enduring legacy Dolla Sisang has left to the industry are the works of a granddaughter, Filmmaker Hilda de Leon, who—directed some of the best films of the 1970s and 1980s, the second Golden Age—including the D/B-produced "Inay," "Bong Manggagawa Ka't Magiting" and "Kakabakaba Ka Ba Ba?"

It was quite fitting that D/B movies bookended the first and second Golden Ages of Philippine cinema.

Dolla Sisang and James de la Rosa in Gregorio Fernandez's "Lahing Tagalugan," Farina Best Picture in 1956.

What Richard said...

from page 64

She goes directly to Congress after school. That's where she does her homework. If there are no cars, Juliana sometimes makes coffee for Cheti.

Don't you have plans of having another child?

We've tried everything but Lucy just won't get pregnant. I wish that when she does, twins so quick. I'm open to trying other ways of making a baby, like in vitro fertilization, but Lucy doesn't want to. Her belief is that if we discard a fertilized egg, you're already killing life. She's a Catholic through and through. She doesn't favor the RH (Reproductive Health) Bill. But she said that if the bill would be modified, OK so sa kanya.

What's Lucy like when she's an ate?

She hardly ever does. She doesn't even know how to scream. We have disagreements, too. We very seldom argue. We'll be celebrating our 13th anniversary in April.

"Mag-Magkabugang Bcbddbl," which premieres on March 23, stars Eugene Rolfo Gutierrez, Philip Salvador, Sheryl Cruz, Carla Humphries and Valerie Concepcion.

E-mail me at [redacted]@inquirer.com.ph

RICHARD Quinto with wife Lucy

DONA Sisang (center) is surrounded by her children, in-laws and grandchildren in 1956.

THE GRAND DAME (center) with LVN's top stars (from left) Charito Solis, Lilia Dizon and Lita Gutierrez.

Remembering Lola Sisang

YESTERDAY

Stars and grandkids pay homage to LVN Pictures' grand dame

By Rayant Ian Clingo Jr.
Photos from the book "Charo Sisang and Filipino Movies"

YOKOHAMA, United Nations Ambassador Charo Santos revealed that she never saw her grandmother, the late LVN Pictures boss Narcisa H. de Leon (popularly known as Doña Sisang), ever "flustered or drunk."

"She was always in her trademark fit-to-conquer boss's regalia," Charo reminisced.

Another granddaughter, Nonita Ibaña, recounted that Doña Sisang never spoke to them in English. "She talked to us only in Tagalog or Spanish."

Ibaña admitted that since she was named after her aunt, she felt a bit daunted living up to the grand dame's prodigious achievements.

"In her memoirs, I was challenged to work just as hard as she did. She was quite a force of nature," Ibaña related.

Doña and Charo were interviewed by Filipino journalist Victor Valbuena for the walkie-talkie book "Asian Women in Film," printed in Singapore last year.

Published by Singapore-based entertainment company Cathay Organization, the book features Doña Sisang, alongside other female achievers from across the region, including assistive Filipina producer Lily Monteverde, Chinese actress Gong Li, Singaporean Stanen and Maggie Cheung, Indian actress Aishwarya Rai and Malaysian actress Michelle Yeoh.

No formal education

Sharp and enterprising, Doña Sisang succeeded in business despite her lack of formal education. (She only finished grade four in elementary school.)

"She mastered different ventures because she wasn't afraid to ask questions. She didn't know anything about the movie industry at the start, but learned the ropes along the way. In the end, she knew every aspect of filmmaking," Charo said.

Apart from running LVN, one of the country's biggest studios during the first Golden Age of Philippine movies (in the 1950s and '60s), Doña Sisang also invested in real estate.

She cultivated rice fields and owned one of the first 12-storey buildings on Ayala Avenue, Makati. (Doña said:

It was called the Harotas Building, of course.

She also owned theaters, including Dalisay, where most LVN movies premiered.

But what's just a town submissive, Lola Sisang also "had a keen sense of humor," her granddaughters remembered. "She was mischievous (sweet)."

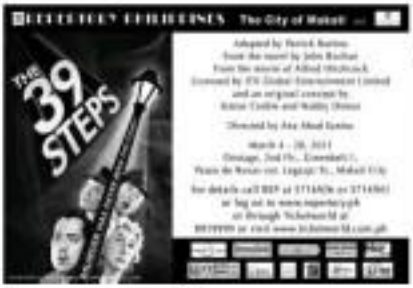
She dubbed her students mischievous actors, Tony Santos Sr. and Leroy Salvador, as the "Mahiwang Bunga" gang.

Actress Mila del Sol, who starred in LVN's first film "Lilim Kid" (released in 1939), revealed that Doña Sisang encouraged her to go into business.

"Doña Sisang told me that I should have a fallback, a business away from the movies," Del Sol said. "She inspired me to

SEE PAGE 2

ROGELIO de la Rosa and Mila del Sol in "Pamulang Hindi Tumatanda," produced in 1956.



What Richard said that made Lucy cry

By Marinel R. Cruz

A LITTLE more time and they will patch things up, says Richard Gutierrez on the rumor, highly publicized spat between friends Willie Revillame and John Estrada.

Richard revealed that he tried to mediate between the two buddies, but backed off when they restated his efforts.

In the game show "Willing Willie," the visibly upset comedienne-host told a live audience that John and another friend, Randy Santiago, would be hosting a noontime show on ABS-CBN, even when he's been negotiating for them to host one on TV5.

Richard had to attend to his Willie who refused to be John's best man in the latter's wedding to franchise model Priscilla Meirelles last month. "I asked Willie if he'd come to the wedding and he replied with a curt 'no,' so I didn't push the issue anymore," Richard told reporters Tuesday night during the launch of the drama series on TV5, "Ang Nagbabagang Bulalak."

He also talked about life with wife Lucy Torres and daughter Juliana.

Did Lucy ever feel bad that you persuaded her to run for Congress? She had repeatedly said she didn't want to be involved in politics.

Lucy (who is now Leyte's 4th District Representative) actually felt sad for the because she knew how hard I worked during the campaign. When I got disqualified, I told her, "Don't cry, done ang pulitika ni Mr. Gutierrez." She cried even more.

What do you think of her as a congresswoman?

She's very persistent. I'm impressed that as a first termer, she is already an assistant majority leader. She goes to different government offices to solicit funds. She looks for livelihood projects that she could bring to her district. We're discussing recently that she might run for another term.

Building classrooms in the province is her pet project. Each classroom costs around P750,000. From the time she assumed office, she has already built over 20. She is so dedicated.

Do you still have time for your daughter Juliana?

TAKE FIVE

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ENTERTAINMENT

Jazzipino exponent sings for P-Noy

LOS ANGELES—"Jazzipino" exponent Charmaine Clamor recently landed a memorable gig—a private concert at the Malacañang Palace.

The Los Angeles-based singer, who was one of the guest artists at the recent Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival (Pijaf), performed on July 25 at the Palace by special request of the United States ambassador to the Philippines, Harry Thomas.

President Aquino and Thomas—who are both jazz fans—and about 60 invited guests reportedly enjoyed the show.

Charmaine shared several of her celebrated jazzipino renditions, as well as standards in English and Spanish.

"It was my first time inside the Malacañang Palace," said the fair-skinned native, who is back in LA. "The event was held in the Grand Office, directly in front of the main building. I was told that the event would be a gathering among friends in a very casual setting. How fortunate that I decided to dress up, as this was the grandest 'very casual' event I ever attended!"

According to Charmaine, the private concert was the idea of Ambassador Thomas and the ambassador's counselor for public affairs Rick Stidman, who are admirers of her music.

She said, "When we finally met at Malacañang, Mr. Thomas asked me to autograph my first album, 'Something for the Soul,' for him. I was touched!"

Apparently, P-Noy has also been touched by him. Charmaine reported: "The President hosted my latest album, 'Something Good,' containing ten of signature-brand Jazzipino singles, 'Pinoy Dela Cima.'"

She said that the guests were "mostly people from the government, including Sen. Mar Roxas, and the US Embassy. I met a lot of them over cocktails. Then we were ushered into the performance space, a cozy room with a grand piano, and also, like a large library. I sang with Filipino guitarist Ernet Llapitan, whom I often perform with when I'm in Manila."

Charmaine's set, she told us, "was mostly Jazzipino and included Kundiman (a 'tagalog' in honor of Ambassador Thomas and Ambassador Rocha's dinner). I also sang 'The Existence of You,' a classic American jazz song. It gave me a thrill to realize that the ambassador and our President enjoyed to be hanging on to every word."

She also performed a song, originally a pinoy, that Nonoy Zuñiga wrote for Gary Aquino. The song, "I fell in Love with the Same Woman Three Times," was set to music by Jose Mari Chan. "P-Noy told me later that it was the best version he ever heard," the chanteuse said.

Then Charmaine did a surprise number. "So close the evening, I sang 'Until Its Jyo,' which many people associate with the Marcoses," she recounted. "But I explained to the audience of dignitaries that I wrongly believe that now is the time to bring this beloved handloom back to the people where it belongs. They agreed! And they honored me sweet with a standing ovation. Seeing President Aquino

PIL-AM Pat Estrada's video with fellow UCLA (MBMA) Kathie Lim and Ann De-ron (MBMA)pose in the best video category of the Second California College Media Awards (CCMA) in LA

standing and clapping was one of the highlights of my life."

Then, even before President Aquino and the Secretary of Budget and Management, Florencio "Butch" Abad, joined me on 'Watch What Happens,'"

For the singer who, at age 3, was entertaining passengers in Manila-bound buses, "the whole Hahnenburg experience was even sweeter because my parents (Baldomero and Noreen Clamor) were present. Singing for President Aquino is particularly meaningful because of what he recently has done for our country, and for us in the symbol of hope and change for a better Philippines."

Of her sixth appearance in Pijaz, Charmaine said: "I had a wonderful life-sweeping time—literal! Starrk on piano, Roger Browne on bass and Efren Rolando on drums. We had a standing-room only concert in one of the hottest venues in Manila: Bistro De Sings in the Peninsula. We had a blast."

Charmaine went from singing for P-Noy in Manila to doing a live in-studio appearance on the BBC/PRI radio program "The World." She also made her debut appearance at Regattabar, Boston's premiere jazz club.

Charmaine is likewise due to perform in Montreal (Oscar of Jazz, May 6 and 7), Paris (Sicrel Le Strand, June 11) and (New Jersey Blues Cabaret on June 19).

In LA, she is the featured performer in the 29th anniversary awards benefit dinner of Search to Involve Filipino Americans (SIFA) on April 26 at the Biltmore Los Angeles Downtown. We hope to see you at Manila at this gala to raise funds for Sipa's various projects serving the multi-ethnic Historic Filipinotown and the greater Los Angeles Filipino American community.

***

Congratulations to Bai Estrada, whose video with fellow UCLA students Kathie Lim and Ann De-ron, won second place in the best video category of the recent California College Media Awards (CCMA).

The CCMA, which holds an annual competition that honors outstanding college student media projects in print and online publications throughout California, drew thousands of entries.

Bai, Kathie and Ann's award-winning video, "Jeepneyers (A Jeepney Documentary)," which focuses on the lively downtown gallery scene, was one of the twelve recognized in the awards banquet held at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel. The prize was one of the many honors won by the UCLA Broadcast.

E-mail the columnist at rempulse_1105@yahoo.com

HONORABLE GIG Charmaine Clamor with (from left) Rick Stidman, public affairs officer of the US Embassy; Noreen Clamor, President Aquino, US Ambassador Harry Thomas and Baldomero Clamor

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STOP HAIRLOSS NOW
WITH PROFESSIONAL HELP.

Experimenting with the wrong treatment and self-diagnosis can only worsen your hair problem — leading to permanent hair loss. So get real help from a professional help. Joey Marquez and Allan Caidic used to suffer from hairloss until somebody recommended Swenson to them. Read on and find out how to stop hairloss and regain your confidence.

For hair, hairloss is no laughing matter. "When I started experiencing hairloss, people called me Moonpie because my bald spot was increasing to the size of a Moonpie's cap. I tried to use hat to hide it, but the truth was it did," he says.

Genetics, poor nutrition, stress, certain medications and climate can cause hairloss. "Mine was triggered by stress. I tried spot-ial shampoos and topical remedies in the U.S., but they didn't give me lasting results," he adds.

For Allan, as a professional coach he always prefers to get advice from another professional. "When I tried solving my thinning crown area, I had no confidence to own the re-growth products. There might be adverse side effects," he says.

A receding hairline, thinning crown area or falling hair – if not properly addressed can lead to baldness. "Most grooming Adonis na 'to I sought professional help," he shares.

For professional hairloss solutions, SWENSON is the answer. Have did they and Allan hair hairless and get thicker, healthier hair!

- **Swenson's Professional Trichologists (hair and scalp analysts)** – assess your hair condition and provide you with a personalized hair recovery program perfect for the stage of your hairloss.
- **Swenson's Intensive Anti-Hairloss System** – blocks the causes of hairloss, strengthens the scalp and nourishes the roots.
- **Swenson's High-Impact Hair Production Blend** – deeply penetrates the follicles to promote hair growth, make hair thicker, healthier and help restore hair's original volume.

Joey says: "In just a few months of treatment, I got thicker, healthier hair – that's even better than before I had hairloss! I look 10 years younger."

Allan says: "After the thicker hair, my self-confidence improved. My self-esteem also rose. Clients are equal to my talent not the hairloss – I can command!"

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BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY You understand the confusion in ideas and events, and you're able and for the solutions you want. You have a terrific sense of ways that your creativity, fantasy and imagination. You have a way of exchanging ideas so you almost magic naturally. Are quite warm and affectionate to make a harm something you protect, because it will make a difference to the future.

Birthdate of: Dawn Lyons, singer/actress; Sue Lyons, actress; Hedda Hopper, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Deal carefully when talking to partners and close friends today, because people are overly critical. You might feel this way about others; they might feel this way about you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your efforts to research solutions to problems are rewarded by someone especially helpful to you. Get acquainted with this person. Be sure that all of your questions or observations are resolved.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Domestic duties or more responsible than you might normally tend to take. Don't hesitate get into them. Only when that the person knows it.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) This is a good day to make a personal appearance to please parents and VIPs. Don't wait for permission or approval. Participate with another day when people are looking more receptive and cooperative.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Avoid stress and travel with individuals and activities today. People might be too busy with you to pay you very much time or attention. Stay at least your cool.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You might be disappointed to learn that some of your plans today. Usually, they're minor in nature. You know important decisions, mortgages, investments or related associations.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Be patient with partners and close friends today. People are quick to take offense, and quick to offend! Negative thinking is rampant. Withdraw!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Partners have many fantastic ideas that you can help them with. Your creative energies are high when it comes to getting your point across. Use your ability in playing to your true colors.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Be cautious about misinterpretations and words used in love to be a bit discouraging today. In fact, these areas might cause frustrations. Don't worry about this.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Work-related matters will have priority consideration, and new results will stand in the way. Do your best, it could be helpful — whether you get it now or by tomorrow!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Don't be surprised if you receive some extra help early and in the afternoon. There is the possibility that someone is trying to do something for you. Be open to this help.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) You might be discouraged about financial matters. Look the facts are numbers in the millions. Besides, things look worse than they are. Relax. Everyone is personally under.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that each row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

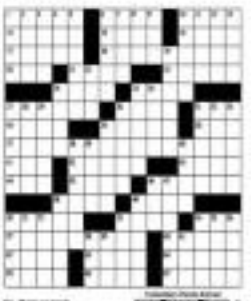
5	4	9	6	1	8	7	3	2
6	7	3	2	4	5	9	1	8
1	8	2	3	9	7	4	6	5
4	5	1	8	6	2	3	9	7
3	6	8	9	7	1	5	2	4
9	2	7	4	5	3	6	8	1
8	1	6	7	3	9	2	4	5
2	3	5	1	8	4	7	9	6
7	9	4	5	2	6	1	7	3

Concepts Sudoku

1	8		3					
3				5	7			
						9		
7				9			6	
	5		2	3	1		7	
	2			4				3
		6						
				5	8			4
					9		5	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Ruther's romper room

At age 12, Ruther cut his teeth as a performer at a Christian church in Mandaluyong.

"My first puppet came from the church's superintendent," he recounted. "I was the youngest in our fellowship's puppeteer group."

He taught himself to do magic and voice by reading different books.

"I also learned basic puppetry from Mang Canang, who was a founding school member, too," he recalled.

He joined the Bayanang Charms as a trainee and in 1999 competed in the "Bibi, Mr., Puppet Bibi" portion of the old ABS-CBN noontime program "Magandang Tanghali Bayan."

Then, PGT was a homecoming of sorts for the 1978 graduate.

Full article

E-mail: bayantanahope@hotmail.com

From page 1

while career.

"Our organization's goal is to uplift our profession," he said. "Malou and I are the first nursery arts in Star Magic's roster. We are the network's first talents who are not singers, models or actors."

He said that his goal is to reach the source of Lou Diluvio, the dean of Filipino magicians. "I tried Lou, that if I could duplicate his achievements, I could retire and return to my church's medical ministries," he said.

It's like coming full circle.

RJ performs magic with a little help from uncle dumo.

MAGICIAN-cum-linguist is a curious gamut of terms.

MOVIE TIME

GLORIETTA 4

1: MARS NEEDS MOMS (3D)
2: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
3: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
4: WHO'S THAT GIRL
5: RANGO
6: RED RIDING HOOD
7: THE EAGLE

GREENBELT 1

1: RED RIDING HOOD
2: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES

GREENBELT 3

1: RED RIDING HOOD
2: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
4: MARS NEEDS MOMS (3D)
5: RANGO

ALABANG TOWN CENTRE

1: RED RIDING HOOD
2: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3: MARS NEEDS MOMS (3D)
4: RANGO
5: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU

ASIA & CENTRE CEBU

1: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
2: RED RIDING HOOD
3: MARS NEEDS MOMS
4: TRUE GRIT

MARQUEE

1: RED RIDING HOOD
2: MARS NEEDS MOMS (3D)
3: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
4: TRUE GRIT

MARKET! MARKET!

1: MARS NEEDS MOMS
2: RANGO
3: RED RIDING HOOD
4: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
7: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU

TRINOMA

1: WHO'S THAT GIRL
2: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
3: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES (3D)
4: MARS NEEDS MOMS
5: RANGO
6: THE EAGLE
7: RED RIDING HOOD

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ENTERTAINMENT Living Stars

Ruther's romper room

A CARD trick fronts

By Krysvilan Diego Jr.
Photos by Rene Ramos

This magician-ventriloquist's got talent and seven puppets

SINCE magician-ventriloquist Ruther Urquia and wife Jean are currently childless, his seven puppets have become their babies, in more ways than one.

Ruther, who was among the top-six finalists in last year's "Pilipinas Got Talent (PGT)," admitted that he spoils his puppets —especially the "superstar" of the lot, naughty kid Tiroy.

(The Urquias also take care of two Shih Tzus, Tiwa and Tess, and two turtle doves. Jean breeds the dogs and the pups are sold on a pet store; the turtle doves are part of Ruther's magic act.)

Ruther oftentimes shops for clothes and shoes for his puppets—much to the surprise of saleslady.

"They'd ask me how old my child is." And then they'd remember Tiroy on PGT. "I get some of his clothes from Ginger Snaps."

He has seven puppets at home: Tiroy 1 (at age 5); Tiroy 2 (at age 6); Tango the strong one; (or Tiroy's pet); Lolo Teddy (he uses marriage counselor); Tori Tori the laughing-crying baby; Jerk the dumb gorilla; and Tele the dry turtle.

"Lolo Teddy wears the dormy of my youngest brother who used it as my wedding (for years ago," he related. "But Lolo Teddy's shoes are Flordeliz."

He bought some puppets from fellow performers, he said.

TITOT 1 at age 2.

WWE Jean breeds Shih Tzus, named Imo and Imo.

SOME of Ruther's trophies from magic competitions.

"Lolo Teddy and Tori Tori are from Wowowee; Tango, from Otey Carreon," he said. "Tele is from Festival. My first and second Tiroy are from Diego Francia."

Ruther is the current president of the Magicians' Foundation Incorporated, which is affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Magicians based in the United States.

(He has won several awards in magic/dance competitions.)

Although he's a no-nonsense person onstage, he can be a perverted kid at home.

"I like playing video games," he revealed. "I'm a serious gamer."

Among his favorites are Final Fantasy, Call of Duty, Fight Night, Dragon Age and NBA 2K12.

The Xbox is a prized possession.

Wife Jean said that the 32-inch LCD TV is a "reservoir" from PGT. "We bought the entertainment center with his winnings on the show." She explained that she wanted palpable proof of her husband's hard work on the program.

Ruther pointed out that PGT has changed his life significantly.

"People say I'm a spontaneous performer, but PGT trained me to write two-minute scripts," he said. "I've matured as an artist."

The ornamental fish has grown up.

PGT has also made him more "in demand" as a performer.

"(Kuh-Ching (PGT contestant and magician) Aiskim and I were nabbed in our previous shows," he recalled. "Once, my wife and I were flying up for a movie at Market! Market! and we were approached by a fan who cried because she was happy to see me."

Before joining PGT, he only had 300 friends on Facebook. During the competition, the number ballooned to 2,000. By the end of the finale, it reached the limit of 5,000 and he had to open another Facebook account.

Tiroy often gets PMs (private messages) from Facebook fans. "A girl wanted Tiroy to be part of the 'Seven Sweet' in her 7th birthday party."

Television has turned him into a celebrity, and magic/ventriloquism into a worthy

RUTHER'S 2

KC and Piolo Tell All about Century Corned Tuna

For weeks, everyone wondered what KC Concepcion and Piolo Pascual when billboards of the two of them in intimate poses were put up on major thoroughfares. "Ready na kami to tell all," said one. "Umayan na kami," said another. Wala is to promote a new television show or movie together. Pwede din naman after to attach the product endorsement? Not likely, but that didn't stop fans from watching and hoping.

Last March 13, after an intimate interview with the two stars on "The Buzz," a new TV commercial was aired, and all the billboards were replaced with a message in each—together, guess no more? Both he and KC say that they immensely enjoyed shooting both the print ads and the TV commercials together, especially since the spiel was shot in Subic, a memorable place for the new couple. "This was where PJ (Piolo's nickname) brought me last February 13 when he 'kidnapped' me for a post-Valentine's Day date," KC said with a smile.

Being a private couple has allowed both Piolo and KC to be sure about their feelings for each other before bringing everything out into the open. They both have been in different relationships that they believed that were the "real deal," but ended up falling in the chaos of heaven between Century Corned Tuna and other canned tuna brands. "For me," KC says, "deals sya. (Feel ko siya nadeserve.)" Piolo echoes this: "Upon 80% deserve siya. And you can really see and feel the difference."

When asked whether their fans can expect their romance to last as long as Century Canning Corporation has provided Filipinos with only the best quality tuna, KC and Piolo only look at each other and share a laugh. Many Filipinos certainly hope so. But instead of a direct answer, we'll just have to wait and see (what will happen) as you decide if KC Piolo's exes and haters "Basta, Wala lang" relationship yan."

HE HOMES his writing by reading comedy books by Jerry Seinfeld and Gary Laing, along with magic books.

HE DOES Scotch Fountain trick with Jean.

CRYING baby Tori Tori was called a "tripanal" by PGT judges.

HE WEARS the talking mask...a ventriloquist's prop.

TANGO is Tiroy's pet.

SMILING baby Tori Tori is made of latex (above). Tori's is Tarzan's best buddy (right).

RUTHER grew up with his puppets starred in name, which Tiroy (right) sometimes resents. "He said he'd commit me to Barney Gumo."